

- RELIQUIAE TENEBRAE -

- CUSTODIA RUINARUM -

PROJECT ANGELBOOK - VOLUME XII - PART 22



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EZEKIEL REDIK YARBROUGH

Reliquiae Tenebrae – Custodia Ruinarum
– Project AngelBook – Volume XII – Part
22

By Ezekiel Redik Yarbrough (DBM
ECLIPZE)

Liminal Archivist's Note

On the Preservation of Distorted Gnosis and the Dying Digital Veil

There is a strange ache that comes from spending all day in the ruins of spiritual memory.

Fifty books made in one day—an inhuman output—should feel like a triumph. But when the source material is splintered, hostile, and drenched in egoic inversion, what remains is not pride... but hollowness.

This volume, like many in this phase, is not composed of my own words.

It is an act of preservation, not expression.

It is a documentation of liminal knowledge, scraped from a dying web—the final breath of spiritual forums, parapsychology ephemera, early occultist blogs, and yes, even the darker corridors of modern satanic movements.

And herein lies the tension:

Much of what is presented under the name Satanism is a distorted half-truth.

It correctly identifies that Yahweh is not the Most High, and in this way, it mirrors certain Gnostic insights—

but then it derails into ego exaltation, materialism, and psychic hostility. It gets halfway to freedom... and then builds a new prison out of flame and shadow.

And yet—

amidst the mockery, venom, and inversions,

there are real spiritual technologies embedded in the code.

Meditation techniques, psychic development maps, astral awareness, breath control, and ritual frameworks.

Not all of it is corrupted.

Some of it is usable tech.

Some of it may be ancient... wearing a new mask.

So I do not endorse what is preserved here.

But I also refuse to let it vanish into untraceable digital decay.

This is an act of containment as much as curation.

I name this phase liminal, because I know it will not last.

There is only so much of the old internet left to preserve.

Only so much unindexed gnosis hiding behind broken blog links and .org forums that haven't been cached since 2012.

When this phase ends, and I return to creation, I will draw from this tomb of fragments with clarity and discernment.

But for now, I am the one who stands in the gateway—

Archiving the bones, sealing the jars, lighting one gold-lettered candle above a chamber of shadows.

To the reader: proceed with awareness.

This is not scripture.

This is sediment.

It is archived because it is dangerous.

And dangerous knowledge, when preserved with respect, often becomes a mirror for deeper truth.

—Ezekiel Redik Yarbrough

Liminal Phase – Discretio Luminis

The Land of Faerie CD

Darragh Nagle

Truly -- "The Land of Faerie" CD is appropriate music for any kind of faerie working or meditation. It is really lovely, ethereal music. The rest is a delightful mix of pagan folk music. According to the note sent with the tapes, Darragh performed with Gwydion way back when. Darragh was kind enough to send me copies of these CDs and tapes for review -- unfortunately -- this means I don't really know where you can get them. Check with Serpentine Music, or in Circle.

"Songs for the Old Religion

Gwydion Pendderwen

"Songs for the Old Religion" is Gwydion Pendderwen's legendary compilation of Pagan songs. Back issues of Green Egg feature music and lyrics credited to Gwydion. Mundanely named Tom DeLong, his death was a terrible blow to the greater Pagan community. He studied with Victor Anderson, and was highly influential in establishing the Feri tradition here in the US. Gwydion's music can be ordered online from Serpentine Music.

"Pick the Apple from the Tree",

Francesca DeGrandis'

"Goddess Keep My Family" is the favorite track off that CD around here.

Cafe Press is where you can get logo items to support the Faerie Shaman website.

This page is part of Pooklaroux's Faerie FAQ on the Faerie Shaman Website

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<http://www.pooklaroux.com/imramtarot.html>

69 captures

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14

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About this capture
Han Morrow Scott's Imram Tarot Website
Imram = term from Celtic Shamanism for otherworld journeyworking

Tarot = a living idea connected with the special deck of cards known by this name

Tarot can:
help you see past, present and potential (future) situations more clearly.
aid you in recognizing and working with your feelings.
stimulate your memory and guide you in reframing work.
take you beyond fate so that you can choose your future.
bring you into communication with non-physical realities. (Including divination important to all magickal workings.)
and much, much more!

Imram Tarot features the work of Han Morrow Scott.

Tarot is the primary vehicle through which I manifest my own spiritual development and through which I help my friends to reach their deepest inner life truths.

Within the panorama of the 78 cards I find all of life's joys and sorrows. I find answers to my questions and questions to things I thought I knew well. It is a petrie dish to culture my queries, and it is a mirror of all my follies and vanities. I am both magnified to my utmost potentials and diminished even to the point of nonexistence. I know of no other tool that so well fits itself to the hand of the one who uses it. It becomes everything one expects and then exceeds those expectations. And yet it is only a set of pieces of paper card, having no intrinsic power of their own. Its origins are often shrouded in veils of ignorance, fantastic tales and outright lie. How can this be a tool of deepest truth?

And that is the mystery of Tarot.

Intuition is the sense that each of us have that connects us to the greater all. The purpose of this sense is to help us move in harmony with others and natural cycles, to keep us on track for personal growth with the help of conscience and to guide us through life's challenges with the help of our spiritual protectors and mentors. There are many different approaches to developing and strengthening our inner guidance.

Tarot is a well-developed tool for such purposes. Like any other tool, it requires study and practice to use Tarot to its full potential. But like a musical instrument in the hands of a master musician, Tarot can sing the tales of your personal truth bringing you healing and opening new potentials for success and satisfaction in your life.

Illustrations from the Rider-Waite Tarot Deck®, known also as the Rider Tarot and the

Waite Tarot, reproduced by permission of U.S. Games Systems, Inc., Stamford, CT 06902 USA. Copyright ©1971 by U.S. Games Systems, Inc. Further reproduction prohibited. The Rider-Waite Tarot Deck® is a registered trademark of U.S. Games Systems, Inc.

Visit the world's best source for tarot decks at www.usgamesinc.com.

Images from Shapeshifter Tarot © Hunt, Conway, Knight by permission from Llewellyn Worldwide. Also visit WebTarot which provides a multitude of spreads, using a variety of Llewellyn decks.

Imram Tarot is a part of a larger site

The Faerie Shaman

[Click here to see a schedule of Han Morrow Scott's workshops and events.](#)

<http://www.pooklaroux.com/>

97 captures

27 Jul 2002 - 28 Feb 2024

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<http://www.lilithslantern.com/branches.htm>

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Branches of Feri

The Feri Tradition (also known as Faery or Faerie) is like a tree with many branches or lines, all ultimately tracing to Victor and Cora Anderson. While not a complete summary, the following may provide some idea of the various lines of Feri. They are listed in roughly chronological order and include some groups and individuals who are teaching today. (Click on links for descriptions.)

Victor and Cora Anderson
Gwydion Pendderwen
Alison Harlow
Silver Wheel
Vanthe Coven
BloodRose
Steve Hewell
West Bay Feri Group
BlackHeart
T. Thorn Coyle
Anaar
Dust Bunnies
Storm Faerywolf
Mandorla

Initiation is necessary before one can fully participate in the Feri Tradition. Groups influenced by Feri but not requiring Feri initiation are listed separately as related traditions.

RELATED TRADITIONS

Compost
Reclaiming

Draconian Pictish-Elven Witchcraft The Third Road®

While we have tried to be as accurate as possible, we cannot vouch for the veracity of all information provided to us. Please note that the listings do not necessarily constitute an endorsement by Lilith's Lantern.

* If you would like to submit a brief description of your own line of Feri for consideration, please contact us [HERE](#) for guidelines.

VICTOR and CORA ANDERSON

The first publicly known sources of the Feri Tradition. Victor and Cora taught Feri from the 1950s until Victor's death in 2001, initiating approximately 25-30 people. The Andersons taught using the apprenticeship model and did not charge for Feri training.

GWYDION PENDDERWEN

An early initiate of the Andersons, Gwydion went on to initiate many others. His lineage tends to emphasize the Celtic elements of Feri. He is particularly known for his poetry and music, including songs created from Victor Anderson's poetry. (Gwydion's music is available through Serpentine Music and Nemeton.) Gwydion Pendderwen's accidental death in 1982 was a great loss to the Pagan community.

ALISON HARLOW

Alison Harlow was initiated by Gwydion Pendderwen in 1970 and trained by Victor and Gwydion. She founded Wings of Vanthi Coven in 1975, co-creating her own line of Feri. She left the coven in 1989, and worked with J'té Argent, her initiate. Alison assisted J'té in hosting invitational Sabbats, combined with occasional Feri teaching. J'te calls her line Firedrake Feri.

Alison passed from this life on June 13, 2004. To visit her memorial, click [HERE](#).

back to the top SILVER WHEEL

Coven founded by several students of the Andersons, including Eldri Littlewolf, Steven Hewell, and Gabriel Carillo (Caradoc). Gabriel was instrumental in the formation of the BloodRose branch of Feri.

VANTHE COVEN

Wings of Vanthi was formed as a Faerie coven in the late 70's by Alison Harlow and Roz Tognoli (now deceased). The coven grew and worked together until 1989, when it was dissolved. A new Vanthe coven was formed shortly afterwards by some of the members of the old coven and continues to this day.

BLOODROSE

Founded by Gabriel Carillo (Caradoc), an initiate of the Andersons. Primarily uses a body of teaching materials initially co-written by Gabriel and Steven Hewell and further developed by Gabriel over the years. Probably the most prolific Feri branch and the first to teach Feri in a paid class setting. Gabriel is currently experimenting with large-scale

teaching via the Internet and E-mail. Teaches internationally. Some members of the Feri community have questioned the ethics of his sexual behavior toward students.

STEVE HEWELL

Initiated in 1976, founding member of Silver Wheel Coven. Teaches both privately one-on-one, and in groups. Rigorous concentration on Feri core practices with an emphasis on the Southern folk magic elements. Atlanta, Georgia, and surrounding areas.

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WEST BAY FERI GROUP

A loose affiliation of Feri initiates and students in the mid-San Francisco Peninsula. The West Bay group meets primarily for Sabbats and for occasional other workings. The members of the group primarily trace their lineages through the Sacred Wheel and Bloodrose lines. The group engages in much experimentation and on-going study within the Feri tradition. (Not currently accepting students.)

BLACKHEART

Combines traditional Anderson teachings with material influenced by Third Road and Caradoc's (Gabriel Carrillo's) early teachings. BlackHeart is a path to Feri Initiation, although such may not be part of every student's experience. Taught by Karina, an initiate of both Third Road and the more traditional Feri Lineage. Teachings are highly personalized. New England area. Web site at www.blackheartferi.com

T. THORN COYLE

A Reclaiming-Feri initiate, Thorn offers paid classes internationally, including a variety of workshops and a two-year, long-distance Feri training program (not leading to initiation).

ANAAR (APRIL NIINO)

Long-time student and initiate of the Andersons, also had some early training with Bloodrose. Named a Feri Grandmaster by Cora Anderson in August 2003. Artist and owner of Tombo Studio. Author of The White Wand. Emphasis on the creative arts as a gateway to Feri. San Francisco Bay Area.

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DUST BUNNIES

Begun by Valerie Walker, former High Priestess of Compost (see below). Originally initiated by Starhawk, she was later also adopted into a Feri lineage descending from Sacred Wheel. Teaches a blend of Compost and Feri material in a not-for-profit class setting. San Francisco area.

STORM FAERYWOLF

Artist, poet, author of The Stars Within the Earth and editor of Witch Eye. Trained in the Bloodrose/Sacred Wheel branch, he has studied other forms of Feri to round-out his practice. A Witch for over 20 years, and Feri for more than half that time, he focuses mainly on shamanic practice, sorcery, queer mysteries, and personal communication with the Divine. Teaches privately using both the class and apprenticeship models.

MANDORLA

A group founded by students and initiates of the Andersons. Works with a core body of

lore, rituals, liturgy, and practices taught by Victor and Cora to their direct initiates during the 1980s and 90s. Places a high value on oral tradition, creativity, and magical and psychic arts. Teaches privately using the apprenticeship model in a coven setting. Members have reclaimed the name Vicia to describe their style, lineage, and practices. Oregon and Southern California areas.
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Related Traditions

Offshoots of Feri, listed in approximate chronological order.

COMPOST

Founded by a group of people including Starhawk, an initiate of the Andersons and author of *The Spiral Dance*. Compost combined Feri with other sources and added substantial amounts of their own original material. Feri initiation was not required, but was passed to some of the members. San Francisco area.

RECLAIMING

Offshoot of Compost. Founded by Starhawk and others as a magical group focusing on political activism. Initiation is not necessary to fully participate in the Reclaiming tradition. However, it does offer several types of initiation--including Feri. Teaches some Feri material in class settings, primarily the Iron and Pearl Pentacles. Began in the San Francisco area and now exists internationally.

DRACONIAN PICTISH-ELVEN WITCHCRAFT

Founded by Brian Dragon, a Feri initiate of the Bloodrose line. Focuses on Pictish magic and also finds inspiration in the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien. Teaches some Feri material.

THE THIRD ROAD®

Founded by Francesca De Grandis (formerly Francesca Dubie), student of the Andersons and author of *Be A Goddess* and *Goddess Initiation*. Blends Feri teachings with Wicca and Celtic shamanism. Does not offer Feri initiation. Teaches through books, classes, and tele-seminars. San Francisco area.

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http://www.coven-of-cythrawl.com/Faery_Wicca.htm

53 captures

28 Feb 2003 - 1 Jan 2016

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2004 2005 2007

About this capture
Coven of Cythrawl

faery Wicca

Also referred to as the fae, fey, feri, faerie, fairy, and fairie tradition. Founded by Victor and Cora Anderson in the mid-late 1950's, when they were inspired to form their own tradition after reading a book by Gerald B. Gardner "Witchcraft Today". Anderson was responsible for writing most of the tradition's rituals, which he initially based on fairy folklore and beliefs, he is still universally recognized as the Grand Master of the Faery Tradition. In 1959, Victor initiated the late Gwydion Pendderwen, who then aged 13, would later become a leading voice in the Faery Tradition.

An old African priestess initiated Victor Anderson into Witchcraft in 1926, they practiced a form of Witchcraft with Huna and African influences, and which was primarily Dahomean-Haitian. Anderson is now one of the last genuine Kahuna. Some of these earlier influences he incorporated into the new Faery tradition. Pendderwen after visiting with an Alex Sanders coven in England, incorporated material from the Alexandrian Book of Shadows. Today the tradition has evolved and contains of a mixture of Green Wicca, Celtic and Druidic practices, as well as modern Witchcraft.

The Faery Tradition honors the Goddess and Her son, brother and lover (The Divine Twins) as the primary creative forces in the universe. The Gods are seen as real spirit beings like ourselves, and not merely aspects of our psyche. The tradition is an ecstatic tradition, rather than a fertility tradition with emphasis on polytheism, practical magic, self-development and theurgy. Strong emphasis is also placed on sensual experience and awareness, including sexual mysticism, which is not limited to heterosexual expression.

This is a mystery tradition of power, mystery, danger, ecstasy, and direct communication with divinity. Most initiates are in the arts and incorporate their own poetry, music and invocations into rituals. The Tradition is gender-equal, and all sexual orientations seem able to find a niche. According to Francesca De Grandis, founder of the 3rd Road branch: "Faerie power is not about a liturgy but about one's body: a Fey shaman's blood and bones are made of stars and Faerie dust. A legitimate branch of Faerie is about a personal vision that is the Fey Folks' gift to a shaman". Initially small and secretive, many of the fundamentals of the tradition have reached a large audience, mainly through the writings of Starhawk, the tradition's most famous initiate. Some secret branches of the tradition remain but while only a few hundred initiates can trace their lineage directly back to Victor Anderson; many thousands are estimated to practice neo-Faery Traditions.

Victor H. Anderson (1917 - 2001)

He was born May 21, 1917 to parents Hilbert and Frances in Clayton, New Mexico. He was delivered by his father on their ranch. After several years of meeting on the astral plane, Victor met his wife, Cora in person in Bend, Oregon in 1944. Recognizing each other immediately, they married three days later on May 3rd.

Victor was an accomplished poet and the author of *Thorns of the Blood Rose*, a modern classic book of Goddess poetry and liturgy first published in 1970, as well as numerous articles on the Feri (Faery) Tradition and Huna. In 1975, he won the Clover International Poetry Competition Award. He was a contributor to *Witch Eye*, *Green Egg* and *Nemeton* magazines.

Victor and Cora are well known as the Grand Masters of the Feri Faith of the Old Religion. Victor was one of the last Kahuna and a Bokor. An extraordinary shaman and priest, he was a member of the Harpy Coven in the 1930s in southern Oregon. Victor and Cora initiated some of the most influential voices in contemporary Paganism, including Starhawk and the late Gwydion Pendderwen.

An accident during childhood left Victor almost totally without sight. As a result, he attended a school for the blind in Oregon. Largely self-educated, Victor had a profound

love of physics, chemistry, literature and world spiritual traditions. He was an avid reader, storyteller and brilliant linguist who spoke numerous languages, among them Hawaiian, Spanish, Creole, Greek, Italian, Gaelic and Dahomean.

He was gifted with a beautiful voice, loved to sing and was adept on the drum. During his adult life, Victor earned his livelihood as a musician, playing the accordion at public and private dances. He was a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles, Alameda Lodge for 40 years.

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<http://www.paralumun.com/witchfaery.htm>
103 captures
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About this capture

FAERY WITCHCRAFT

An American craft founded by Victor Anderson and Gwydion Pendderwen. Although in the beginning this craft was very small secretive it has now reached a wide audience. The faery tradition honors nature and reveres the dieties that personify the forces of nature, life, fertility, death and rebirth. There is no standard secret book of shadows in this craft.

Some aspects of the craft still remain a secret but most aspects are now taught openly. The faery tradition provides for a passing of power upon initiation.

Faery tradition also identifies different currents of energy within the universe. Two key teachings centre on the iron and pearl pentagrams. These are meditational tools to bring oneself into balance with the universe and to explore the self.

The faery tradition also permits eclectism. Rituals are offerings of beauty to the Gods.
The Real Witches Handbook

WITCHCRAFT

PARALUMUN

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Feri Tradition
In the news

Directed by Frank Borzage
New York Press, NY -

... They are a political response, not just C&W's white blues tradition. ... Breakston) wants to join one troop and challenge the Red Shirts led by Feri Ats (Frankie ... The Feri Tradition (also Faery, Fairy, Faerie etc.) is an ecstatic, rather than a fertility, tradition of witchcraft stemming from the teachings of Victor and Cora Anderson. Strong emphasis is placed on sensual experience and awareness, including sexual mysticism, which is not limited to heterosexual expression. In this, as in the general spirit of spiritual exploration, there is more risk-taking encouraged than in many Wiccan traditions which may have specific laws limiting behavior, and there is a certain amorality historically associated with the Tradition. Among the distinguishing features of

the Faery tradition is the use of a Faery Power which characterizes the lineage. They see themselves, when enchanted, as "fey"—not black, not white, outside social definitions, on the road to Faeryland, either mad or poetical. They are aware that much of reality is unseen, or at least has uncertain boundaries. There is a deep respect for the wisdom of Nature, a love of beauty, and an appreciation of bardic and mantic creativity. Core teachings acknowledged by many of the branches of the tradition include the doctrines of the Three Souls, the Iron and Pearl pentacles, as well as an awareness of "energy ecology", which encourages practitioners to never give away or to waste their personal power, preferring instead techniques designed towards transmuting "negative" energy into a pure and more useful form. Trance experiences and personal connection with the Divine is at the heart of this path which has led to a wide variety of practices throughout the larger body of the tradition.

History and Lines of the Feri Tradition

Victor Anderson started creating the Feri Tradition, then known as Vicia, more-or-less in its modern form in the 1940s. He began initiating people on an individual basis into the tradition before the 1950's. According to Cora Anderson, Victor received a letter in 1960 (other accounts say it was a phone call) from several witches in Italy, among them Leo Martello, asking him to form a coven in California.

During the 1950's and 60's, Victor's Craft "foster-son," Gwydion Pendderwen (Tom deLong) worked with him, and helped to edit and publish Victor's book, *Thorns of the Blood Rose*. Gwydion brought in the name "Faery" (later changed to "Feri" to avoid confusion with R.J. Stewart's Fairy work), emphasized Celtic origins almost exclusively in his own practice, with a smattering of vodou; other teachers have emphasized the Hawaiian, the African-diaspora, or even traced the lineage back to the Attacotti, who were small dark possibly southern European settlers in Scotland thousands of years ago.

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Among the breakaway lines which depart considerably from the mainstream of Feri are Brian Dragon's Draconian Pictish-Elven Witchcraft at <http://www.pictdom.org/>

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Other External links

FeriTradition.Org

The Land of the Feri

Faerywolf

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<http://feri-tradition.wikiverse.org/>

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[Feri Tradition](#)

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[Directed by Frank Borzage](#)

[New York Press, NY -](#)

... They are a political response, not just C&W's white blues tradition. ... Breakston) wants to join one troop and challenge the Red Shirts led by Feri Ats (Frankie ... The Feri Tradition (also Faery, Fairy, Faerie etc.) is an ecstatic, rather than a fertility, tradition of witchcraft stemming from the teachings of Victor and Cora Anderson. Strong emphasis is placed on sensual experience and awareness, including sexual mysticism, which is not limited to heterosexual expression. In this, as in the general spirit of spiritual exploration, there is more risk-taking encouraged than in many Wiccan traditions which may have specific laws limiting behavior, and there is a certain amorality historically associated with the Tradition. Among the distinguishing features of the Faery tradition is the use of a Faery Power which characterizes the lineage. They see themselves, when enchanted, as "fey"—not black, not white, outside social definitions, on the road to Faeryland, either mad or poetical. They are aware that much of reality is unseen, or at least has uncertain boundaries. There is a deep respect for the wisdom of Nature, a love of beauty, and an appreciation of bardic and mantic creativity. Core teachings acknowledged by many of the branches of the tradition include the doctrines of the Three Souls, the Iron and Pearl pentacles, as well as an awareness of "energy ecology", which encourages practitioners to never give away or to waste their personal power, preferring instead techniques designed towards transmuting "negative" energy into a pure and more useful form. Trance experiences and personal connection with the Divine is at the heart of this path which has led to a wide variety of practices throughout the larger body of the tradition.

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Fertility

In the news

Mare Fertility Insurance

TheHorse.com, KY -

... Mare fertility insurance is one form of risk reduction that has become relatively commonplace, particularly among breeders who breed commercially or who must ...

New Fertility Book Takes Midlife Parenting World by Storm

Heliographica (press release), CA -

Swindon (HELIOGRAPHICA NEWS) 3/13/06 -- Enhancing Fertility After Age 40, a revolutionary ebook that was released last month, has not only offered hope and ...

Naomi Watts Seeks Fertility Help

Starpulse.com, CT -

... Watts has been dating American actor Liev Schreiber since April, and the pair were seen visiting fertility expert Lily Liu during a visit to Sydney, Australia ...

The liberal baby bust

USA Today -

... raise large families. Today, fertility correlates strongly with a wide range of political, cultural and religious attitudes. In the ...

Fertility hospital scandal

China Daily, China -

... hospital first hit local newspaper headlines in January after an Anhui Province couple working in Shanghai said they were cheated by Changjiang's fertility ward ...

Fertility is the ability of people or animals to produce healthy offspring in abundance.

The term was usually applied to females, but increasingly is applied to males as well, as

common understanding of reproductive mechanisms increases and the importance of the male role is better known.

Human fertility depends on factors of nutrition, sexual behavior, culture, instinct, endocrinology, timing, economics, way of life, and emotions. Animal fertility is no less complex, and may display astounding mechanisms.

The opposite is infertility.

By extension fertility is also applied to farmlands and plants, and a large crop of sound fruits, seeds or vegetables is the expectation.

The fertility rate is a demographic measure of the number of children per woman.

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Female

In the news

Steelers' trainer only female in profession

Bothell Herald, United States -

By John Sleeper. But as the first and only female full-time athletic trainer in the NFL, it's difficult to think of her as anything else. ...

Abortion Ban Struck Down; Female Soldiers at Risk

Women's eNews, NY -

... 30. Her decision puts Chile in the top ranks of countries when it comes to female representation in government. In the latest annual ...

Hamas' secret weapon? Its female supporters

Houston Chronicle, United States -

... Hamas activated female supporters in unprecedented numbers. It staged staged rallies for women, and also reached them through through ...

Female and forgetful? It may not be the memory

Seattle Post Intelligencer -

By LEE BOWMAN. Women who are approaching menopause and feel their memories are slipping may be right -- but it's not because their ...

Reviewed affiliation policy: Prisons Department shifting female ...

Daily Times, Pakistan -

By Aayan Ali. LAHORE: Female inmates at various jails of Punjab will now be sent to jails near their hometowns to facilitate family meetings and their lawyers. ...

Female is a sex that denotes an animal which produces egg cells in order to reproduce. (The "egg cell" is the larger gamete).

The female is one half of a heterogamous reproduction system, where the male is the other half. In many cases, a female cannot reproduce without sexual intercourse with a male, although some exceptions exist. What actually differentiates a female from a male is not always apparent, and in some cases is more a question of definition than anything else.

Female is commonly represented by the symbol ♀

'Female' and 'male' designate reproductive structures in plants, so the concept is not just limited to animals.

A woman is a female human being.

Female or Feminine is a grammatical gender in many languages.

In most cultures, women are expected to conform to a standard female gender role.

In hardware and electronics, a female connector is a fixture, such as a socket, which is designed to have a corresponding (male) fitting inserted into it (see gender changer). The word female figuratively means internal based on this sense.

See the main article on woman for more on female humans.

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/male>

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Male

In the news

She's Got Male

Anorak.co.uk (satire), UK -

CANCEL the crabsticks. Stop the jellied eel machine. Call off the agents. News is that Chantelle is not going to marry her Big Brother housemate Preston. ...

Male Prep Athlete of the Week: Hills a true leader for Tigers

Mercury-Register, CA -

By IRA WEINTRAUB-Sports Writer. True leaders on the hardwood want possession of the ball in the most critical situations, and AJ ...

Ryan Martin Named Mount Male Athlete of The Week

Mt. St. Mary's Athletics, MD -

Junior Ryan Martin has been named Mount St. Mary's Male athlete of the Week for the week ending Jan. 31. Martin had a strong meet ...

Casual Male Retail Group to Unload Canton Headquarters in a Sale ...

Commercial Property News -

Casual Male Retail Group has entered into a sale-leaseback transaction with Spirit Finance Corp., in which the apparel retailer will sell its headquarters and ...

Older Male Smokers should be screened for Abdominal Aneurysm

PakTribune.com, Pakistan -

ISLAMABAD: Former or current male smokers between 65 and 75 years old should receive an ultrasound screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm, recommends the US ...

Male is a sex that denotes an organism which produces sperm cells in order to reproduce. (The sperm is defined as the smaller gamete). The male is one half of a heterogamous reproduction system, where the female is the other half.

'Male' and 'female' designate reproductive structures in plants, so the concept is not just limited to animals.

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Male or Masculine is a grammatical gender in many languages.

A man is a male human being.

In most cultures, men are expected to conform to a standard male gender role.

In hardware and electronics, a male connector is a fixture, such as a plug, which is designed to be inserted into a corresponding (female) fitting. (See gender changer.) Also, the word male figuratively means "external", based on this sense.

Male (capitalized) is the capital city of Maldives, as well as the island (atoll) it is on.

See the main article on man for more on male humans.

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/culture>

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Culture

In the news

Culture Culture at the Brits

Guardian Unlimited, UK -

Unlike the Oscars, there is no great suspense about the Brits. Can you even remember who won, say, best male solo artist in 2003? ...

Relax and see internationally at the Culture Café

UWM Post, WI -

Last Thursday, the Global Student Alliance kicked off its first Culture Café event of the spring semester with a presentation on Turin, the setting for the ...

Cartoon furor points to clash of culture

USA Today -

In reading letters to the editor, it has become apparent to me that readers really don't understand the issue of the prophet Mohammed cartoons and why they ...

Human Rights Culture: 'Schools the best place to start'

Malay Mail, Malaysia -

The culture of human rights is taking root in the country. However, much effort is needed on the part of every individual to make it a reality for all. ...

Culture week has 'bustling' opening

VietNamNet Bridge, Vietnam -

The exhibition, held at the Vietnam Art and Culture Centre on Hoa Lu Street, features nearly 100 large photos by various Chinese photographers, introducing ...

For other uses of culture see Culture (disambiguation).

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1.1 Historical Definitions

2 Related Topics

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Definitions

The word culture comes from the Latin root *colere*, (to inhabit, to cultivate, or to honor). In general it refers to human activity; different definitions of culture reflect different theories for understanding, or criteria for valuing, human activity. In 1952 Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn compiled a list of over 200 different definitions of culture in their book, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*.

Popular use of the word culture in many Western societies can reflect the stratified character of those societies. Many use the word culture to refer to elite consumption goods and activities such as fine cuisine, art, and music. Some label this as "high" culture to distinguish it from "low" culture, meaning non-elite consumption goods and activities.

Historical Definitions

Eighteenth and early 19th century scholars, and many people today, often identify culture with "civilization" and oppose both to "nature". Thus people lacking elements of "high culture" often seemed more "natural," and observers often criticise (or defend) elements of high culture for repressing "human nature".

By the late nineteenth century, anthropologists argued for a broader definition of culture that they could apply to a wide variety of societies. They began to argue that culture is human nature, and that culture has its roots in the universal human capacity to classify experiences, and encode and communicate them symbolically. Consequently, people living apart from one another develop unique cultures, but elements of different cultures can easily spread from one group of people to another.

Anthropologists have thus had to develop methodologically and theoretically useful definitions of the word. Technically, anthropologists distinguish between material culture and symbolic culture, not only because each reflects different kinds of human activity but because they constitute different kinds of data that require different methodologies.

Another common way of understanding culture is to see it as consisting of three elements: Values (ideas), Norms (behaviors), and Artifacts (things, or material culture). Values are ideas about what in life is important. They guide the rest of the culture. Norms are expectations of how people will behave in different situations. Each culture has different methods, called sanctions, of enforcing its norms. Sanctions vary with the

importance of the norm; norms that a society enforces formally are called laws. Artifacts, the third component of culture, derive from the culture's values and norms.

As a rule, archeologists focus on material culture, and cultural anthropologists focus on symbolic culture, although ultimately both groups maintain interests in the relationship between these two dimensions. Moreover, anthropologists understand "culture" to refer not only to consumption goods, but to the general processes which produce such goods and give them meaning, and to the social relationships and practices in which such objects and processes become embedded.

In the early twentieth century anthropologists understood culture to refer not to a set of discrete products or activities (whether material or symbolic) but rather to underlying patterns of products and activities. Moreover, they assumed that such patterns had clear bounds (thus, some people confuse "culture" for the society that has a particular culture). In smaller societies in which people merely fell into categories of age, gender, household, and descent group, anthropologists believed that people more or less shared the same set of values and conventions. In larger societies in which people undergo further categorisation by region, race, ethnicity, and class, they believed that members of the same society often had highly contrasting values and conventions. They thus used the term subculture to identify the cultures of parts of larger societies. Since subcultures reflect the position of a segment of society vis a vis other segments and the society as a whole, they often reveal processes of domination and resistance.

Related Topics

Cultural studies developed in the late 20th century, in part through the reintroduction of Marxist thought into sociology, and in part through the articulation of sociology and other academic disciplines such as literary criticism, in order to focus on the analysis of subcultures in capitalist societies. Following the non-anthropological tradition, cultural studies generally focus on the study of consumption goods (such as fashion, art, and literature). Because the 18th and 19th century distinction between "high" and "low" culture seems inappropriate to apply to the mass-produced and mass-marketed consumption goods which cultural studies analyses, these scholars refer instead to popular culture.

Today some anthropologists have joined the project of cultural studies. Most, however, reject the identification of culture with consumption goods. Furthermore, many now reject the notion of culture as bounded, and consequently reject the notion of subculture. Instead, they see culture as a complex web of shifting patterns that link people in different locales, and link social formations of different scales.

(see Culture theory, Culture jamming)

Culture of countries

Australia
Belgium
Brazil
Canada
Chile
China
Denmark
Egypt
France
India
Italy
Japan
Korea
Mexico
Netherlands
New Zealand
Peru
Portugal
United Kingdom
Wales
United States
Other cultures
Assyro-Babylonian culture
Cassette culture
Cemetery H culture
Culture and politics of Toronto
Culture of Stockholm
Culture of Sydney
Culture of the Maori
Deaf culture
Dominator culture
Esperanto culture
European Capital of Culture
European City of Culture
Hacker culture
Indus Valley Culture
Kultur
La Tene culture
Natufian culture
Paideia Greek classical culture
Political Culture of Canada
Political culture of Quebec
Queer culture
Romanitas Roman Imperial culture
Underground culture
Weimar Culture

Western culture

Related articles

World Values Survey

Palace of Culture

Warsaw Palace of Culture and Science

Quotations

"Culture is the sum of all the forms of art, of love and of thought, which, in the course of centuries, have enabled man to be less enslaved", Andre Malraux

"When two cultures collide is the only time when true suffering exists", Hermann Hesse

"The Freudian and Einsteinian views of the world have been deeply embedded into the culture which has shaped their generation. Freud and Einstein, from their utterly different perspectives, have influenced Western popular culture by generating two powerful beliefs: the belief that all the answers to our psychological (and even spiritual) questions are within us: and the belief that everything (not just time and space, but knowledge and morality as well) is relative, Hugh Mackay (1938[?]).

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Instinct

In the news

Ruby follows her instinct

Al-Bawaba, Jordan -

Controversial Egyptian singer Ruby is about to complete her latest music video for the song "Misheet wara Ihsasi" (I Followed a Feeling). ...

Hiller Instinct: Healthcare

WHDH-TV, MA -

... Healthcare is not a right. If you don't believe that, try paying your next doctor's bill with the constitution. I'm Andy Hiller, and that's my instinct.

FERGIE HOPES FOR 'WINNING INSTINCT'

Sportinglife.com, UK -

... the very end. "It tells them a bit about Manchester United and might develop them in terms of the winning instinct.". The Carling ...

Benitez tells Reds to show killer instinct

ic Liverpool, UK -

By David Prentice, Liverpool Echo. FRUSTRATED Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez urged his side to help themselves to second helpings ...
Beckham brand set for further cosmetics expansion
CosmeticsDesign-Europe.com, France -
... Further to this, a fragrance featuring the England football captain was launched in November last year called David Beckham Instinct. ...

Instinct is the word used to describe inherent dispositions towards particular actions. Instincts are generally an inherited pattern of responses or reactions to certain kinds of situations. In humans, they are most easily observed in responses to emotions. Instincts generally serve to set in motion mechanisms that evoke an organism to action. The particular actions performed may be influenced by learning, environments, and natural principles. Generally, instinct is not used to describe an existing condition or established state.

Examples can be observed in the behavior of animals, which perform various activities (sometimes complex) that are not based upon prior experience (such as reproduction, and feeding by insects). Other examples include animal fighting, animal courtship behavior, and internal escape functions.

Some sociobiologists and ethologists have attempted to comprehend human and animal social behavior in terms of instincts. Psychoanalysts have stated that instinct refers to human motivational forces (such as sex and aggression). This use of the term has mainly been disregarded. The motivational forces among humans are now generally referred to as instinctual drives.

See also: Animal psychology, Ego, Superego and Id, Psychology, Ethology, Sociobiology, Reason, Unconscious mind, Culture theory

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Jerusalem Post, Israel -

You had to be an "expert" to miss the signs pointing to a landslide Hamas victory. There were the recent municipal elections with a strong Hamas showing. ...

The economics of crowd control

Jamaica Gleaner, Jamaica -

... But when you have too many people who want to get into a limited space the laws of economics take over and the pricing mechanism has to come into play. ...

Bush Echoes Presidents Past in Empty Talk of Economics

Washington Post, United States -

In his State of the Union speech last night, President Bush single-handedly revived the spirit of bipartisanship that has been so sorely lacking in Washington ...

Stripper economics

Detroit Metro Times, MI -

Metro Times' crack Hit Singles squad dived into the neon wilds of Detroit's strip club row, to Eight Mile and beyond. It was research, to be sure. ...

Economics is the social science that studies the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services, in terms of the trade offs between competing alternatives as observed through measurable quantities such as input, price and output. The field of economics comprises a number of potentially irreconcilable theories about systems of production and distribution, but as a general rule economists study human behavior and welfare as a relationship between ends socially required and scarce means which have alternative uses (Lionel Robbins, 1935).

Understanding choices by individuals and groups is central in economics. With scarcity, choosing one alternative implies forgoing another alternative; economists refer to the best alternative forgone by taking another choice as the opportunity cost. For instance, learning one skill implies time not spent learning another. In a market setting, the currently dominant theory is that scarcity is often quantified by price relationships.

Economists believe that incentives and desires together play an important role in shaping decision making. Concepts from the Utilitarian school of philosophy are used as analytical concepts within economics, though economists appreciate that society may not adopt utilitarian objectives. One example of this is the idea of a utility function, which is assumed to be the means by which individual economic actors decide what makes them "happy" and what decisions they make in pursuit of that happiness.

The subject is said to be positive when it attempts to explain the consequences of different choices given a set of assumptions and normative when it prescribes a certain route of action.

Aspects receiving particular attention in economics are resource allocation, production, distribution or trade, and competition.

The word economy comes from the Greek oikos- for "house" and nomos for "laws" or "norms". Originally, the term economics was used for different contexts: the house, a town, a city (the "polis" in Greek).

This last use originated the term political economy, while the term economics was coined around 1870 and popularized by Alfred Marshall. Note that the word economist predated economics.

After this "change", the term "political economy" has been used to denote the "classical economy" of the 19th century, with Adam Smith, David Ricardo and Karl Marx as its main thinkers, in recent years the term has also been used to describe the study of production systems which are not viewed through the lens of price, but through descriptions of the network of relationships and requirements involved in a particular economy. There are also those who use the terms economics and political economy as interchangeable.

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Areas of study in economics

Economics is usually divided into two main branches:

Microeconomics, which examines the economic behaviour of individual actors such as firms, households, and individuals, with a view to understand decision making in the face of scarcity and the allocation consequences of these decisions.

Macroeconomics, which examines an economy as a whole with a view to understanding the interaction between economic aggregates such as national income, employment and inflation. Note that this is different from general equilibrium theory, which deals with aggregate problems from a strictly constructed microeconomic viewpoint.

Attempts to join these two branches or to refute the distinction between them have been important motivators in much of recent economic thought, especially in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Today, the consensus view is arguably that good macroeconomics has solid microeconomic foundations; i.e. its premises have theoretical and evidential support in microeconomics.

Economics can also be divided into numerous subdisciplines that do not always fit neatly into the macro/micro categorization. Some of these subdisciplines include: international economics, labour economics, welfare economics, resource economics, environmental economics, managerial economics, financial economics, urban economics, and spatial economics.

There are also methodologies used by economists whose underlying theories are important.

The most significant example may be econometrics, which applies statistical techniques to the study of economic data. Computational economics relies on mathematical methods, including econometrics.

Another trend which is more recent, and closer to microeconomics, is to use social psychology concepts (behavioral economics) and methods (experimental economics)

Other subdivisions are possible. Finance has traditionally been considered a part of economics – as its body of results emerges naturally from microeconomics – but has today effectively established itself as a separate, though closely related, discipline.

There has been an increasing trend for ideas and methods from economics to be applied in wider contexts. Since economics analysis focuses on decision making, it can be applied (with varying degrees of success) to any field where people are faced with alternatives – education, marriage, health, etc. Public Choice Theory studies how economic analysis can apply to those fields traditionally considered outside of economics. The areas of investigation in Economics therefore overlap with other social sciences, including political science and sociology. See political economy for the study of economics in the context of political science. The most prevalent political economy is loosely called capitalism.

Economic assumptions

Mainstream economics does not assume a priori that markets are preferable to other

forms of social organization. In fact, much analysis is devoted to cases where so-called market failures lead to resource allocation that is suboptimal by some standard. In such cases, economists may attempt to find policies that will avoid waste; directly by government control, indirectly by regulation that induces market participants to act in a manner consistent with optimal welfare, or by creating 'missing' markets to enable efficient trading where none had previously existed. This is studied in the field of collective action.

Mainstream economics centers around the relationship between supply and demand. Supply can be said to be the amount of a given commodity available at a give price, and demand can be said to be the amount of a commodity that would be purchased at a given price. Mainstream economic theory centers on creating a series of supply and demand relationships, describing them as equations, and then adjusting for factors which produce "stickiness" between supply and demand. Analysis is then done to see what "trade offs" are made in the "market" which is the negotiation between sellers and buyers. Analysis is done as to what point the ability of sellers to sell becomes less useful than other opportunities. This is related to "marginal" costs - or the price to produce the last unit that can be sold profitably, versus the chance of using the same effort to engage in some other activity.

Despite the extreme controversy surrounding larger economic issues, there is significant agreement among mainstream economists on the fundamentals of the subject, especially as reflected in microeconomics as opposed to macroeconomics. In particular the nature of money, supply and whether price reflects available information are areas of dispute. See below for further discussion.

Much contemporary theory assumes that economic agents act rationally to optimize well-being given available information. This may sometimes be an acceptable approximation - for instance, if a given individual's irrationality is canceled out in the aggregate) and tends to produce tractable results. However, this framework ("homo economicus" - has for decades been understood as a handy approximation (e.g., see Herbert Simon's model for "bounded rationality", which was awarded a Nobel Prize in 1978). More recently, irrational behavior and imperfect information have increasingly been the subject of formal modelling, often referred to as behavioral economics, for which Daniel Kahneman won a Nobel Prize in 2002. An example is the growing field of behavioral finance which combines previous theory with cognitive psychology.

Economic language and reasoning

Economics relies on rigorous styles of argument more than other social sciences. This is at least, the purported ideal of professionals in the field. Economic methodology has several interacting parts;

Collection of economic data. This data consists of collecting measurable values of price, and changes in price, for measurable commodities. For example the cost to hire a worker for a week, or the cost of a particular commodity, and how much is typically

used.

Formulation of models of economic relationships, for example, the relationship between the general level of prices and the general level of employment. This includes observable forms of economic activity: money, consumption, preferences, buying, selling, prices etc. Some of the models are simple accounting models, while others postulate specific kinds of economic behavior, such as utility or profit maximization. An example of a model which illustrates both of these aspects, is the classical mathematical formulation of the Keynesian system involving the consumption function and the national income identity. In this article we will refer to such models as formal models although they are not formal in the sense of formal logic.

Production of Economic statistics. Taking the data collected, and applying the model being used to produce a representation of economic activity. For example the "general price level" is theoretical idea common to macroeconomic models. The specific inflation rate involves taking measurable prices, and a model of how people consume, and calculating what the "general price level" is from the data within the model. For example suppose that gasoline costs 1 euro a liter, to calculate the price level would require a model of how much gasoline an average person uses, and what fraction of their income is devoted to this - but it also requires having a model of how people use gasoline, and what other goods they might substitute for it, which requires a model.

Reasoning within economic models. This process of reasoning (see the articles on informal logic, logical argument, fallacy) may or may not involve advanced mathematics. For instance, an established (though possibly unexamined) tradition among economists is to reason about economic variables in two-dimensional graphs in which curves representing relations between the axis variables are parametrized by various indices. A good example of this type of reasoning is exhibited by Paul Krugman's online essay, *There's something about macro*. See also the article *IS/LM model*. One critical analysis of economic reasoning is studied in Paul Samuelson's thesis, *Foundations of Economic Analysis*: he identifies a class of assertions called operationally meaningful theorems which are those that can be meaningfully formulated within an economic model. As usual in science, the conclusions obtained by reasoning have a predictive as well as confirmative (or dismissive) value. An example of the predictive value of economic theory is a prediction as to the effect of current deficits on interest rates 10 years into the future; An example of the confirmative value of economic theory would be confirmation (or dismissal) of theories concerning the relation between marginal tax rates and the deficit.

Formal modelling is motivated by general principles of consistency and completeness. Formal modelling has been adopted to some extent by all branches of economics. It is not the identical to what is often referred to as mathematical economics; this includes, but is not limited to, an attempt to set microeconomics, in particular general equilibrium on solid mathematical foundation. Some reject mathematical economics: The Austrian School of economics believes that anything beyond simple logic is often unnecessary and inappropriate for economic analysis. In fact, the entire empirical-deductive framework sketched in this section may be rejected outright by this school. However, we believe the framework sketched here represents accurately the current predominant view of economics.

Development of economic thought

Modern economic thought is usually said to have begun with Adam Smith in the late 18th century, although earlier thinkers such as the Spanish Scholastics and the physiocrats made important contributions. For an overview of precursors to Smith as well as an overview of schools that have developed later, see history of economic thought. Modern mainstream economics can be said to begin with Mills focusing of what was then called "political economy" on "wealth" which he defined exclusively in relation to the exchange value of objects, or what would now be called price. "Classical Economics," as the economic work of the period is called, forms the foundation of micro-economics.

The central idea promoted by Smith was that the competition between various suppliers and buyers would produce the best possible distribution of goods and services, because it would encourage individuals to specialize and improve their capital, so as to produce more value with the same labor. As with its contemporaneous idea of evolution, it rests on the belief that large systems can be self-regulating by the activity of their parts, without specific direction. Smith's formulation is called the "invisible hand" and is still the centerpiece of market economics, and capitalism in particular.

In the 19th century, Karl Marx synthesized a variety of schools of thought involving the social distribution of resources, including the work of Adam Smith, as well as socialism and egalitarianism, and used the systematic approach to logic taken from philosopher Hegel to produce "Das Kapital". His work was the most widely adhered-to critique of market economics during much of the 19th and 20th centuries. The Marxist paradigm of economics is not generally held in high regard by market economists, though some concepts from his work are occasionally used in mainstream contexts, particularly in labor economics and in political economy. The term Marxian is in some contexts used to describe work which accepts concepts from his work but does not necessarily subscribe to the political thrust of Marxist thought.

In the early 20th century, economics became increasingly statistical, and the study of econometrics became increasingly important. Statistical treatment of price, unemployment, money supply and other variables, as well as the compiling of these statistics, became more and more central to economic writing and disputes within the field of economics.

Macroeconomics diverged from microeconomics with Keynes in the 1920s, and was codified in the 1930s by Keynes and others, particularly John Hicks. It grew in popularity as a reaction to the Great Depression. Keynes had been an influential exponent of the importance of central banking and government involvement in economic affairs, as well as a critic of the political economy of the post World War I period. His "General Theory" encapsulated both criticisms of classical theory that had been levelled by Thorstein Veblen and others, as well a method for economic management of aggregate demand. For an overview of a number of competing schools, see macroeconomics.

Many economists use a combination of Neoclassical microeconomics and Keynesian macroeconomics. This combination, sometimes known as the Neoclassical synthesis, was dominant in Western teaching and public policy in the years following World War II and up to the late 1970s. The neoclassical school was challenged by monetarism, formulated in the late 1940's and early 1950's by Milton Friedman and associated with the University of Chicago.

In principle, economics can be applied to any type of economic organization. However, the majority of economic theory centers around systems where goods are exchanged in the market - where buyers and sellers seek to maximize their results by trading. The dominant form of market economics focuses on societies where property is owned by individuals, money has a rational basis, and profit comes from utilizing labor and capital to produce goods to be sold in the market - or capitalism. However, economic theory is also applied to markets where the control of capital is in the hands of the state or society, which include socialism and mercantilism, and to societies where the allocation of resources is not through the market, but through political mechanisms, generally referred to as command economies, which includes communism and other forms of totalitarianism. Many economists assert that it is impossible to avoid the "Invisible Hand" of the Market, and hence all societies can be modelled through market dynamics, though this viewpoint has vehement opponents across the political spectrum.

The development of economics as a field of study is closely related to the rise of capital as the primary determining factor of production and trading, hence its most detailed and precise work has dealt with the institutions belonging to market societies, and most specifically to capitalist and socialist societies. To what extent economics must be adjusted to be applied to earlier forms of social organization has been the source of discussion. Generally, mainstream economists mostly feel that the basic framework of economics is relevant and flexible enough to be applied to virtually any form of society. Marxist economics asserts that history is divided into eras which are determined by which two classes, which are struggling to control the means of production - that is slaves and masters, peasants and royalty, wage workers and capitalists - and that mainstream economics only applies to those societies which are "objectively" industrial, that is to say, societies which are capable of industrial production based on their own knowledge and resources. (See Marxism, particularly "The Hegelian Roots of Marxism".)

In the late 20th Century three of the areas of study which are producing change in economic thinking are: risk based rather than price based models, imperfect economic actors, and treating economics as a biological science, based on evolutionary norms rather than abstract exchange.

The study of risk has been influential, which viewed variations in price over time as more important than actual price. This particularly applies to financial economics where risk-return tradeoffs are the crucial decisions to be made.

The most important area of growth has been in the study of information and decision.

Examples of this school include the work of Joseph Stiglitz. Problems of asymmetric information and moral hazard, both based around information economics, profoundly affect modern economic dilemmas like executive stock options, insurance markets, and third-world debt relief.

Finally, there are a series of economic ideas rooted in the conception of economics as a branch of biology, including the idea that energy relationships rather than price relationships determine economic structure, and the use of fractal geometry to create economic models. (See Energy Economics)

In its infancy is the application of non-linear dynamics to economic theory, as well as the application of evolutionary psychology. So far the most visible work has been in the area of applying fractals to market analysis, particularly arbitrage. (See Complexity in Economics)

Another infant branch of economics is neuroeconomics. This combines neuroscience, economics, and psychology to study how we make choices.

Economics in the context of Western thought

Basic Scarcity in Economic Theory

Because scarcity and decision are central to economic theory, the question of what is the basic trade-off in economics is of central importance. In every economic theory, there is a basic exchange of two or more ultimately scarce commodities. For Adam Smith, it was defined as the trading of time, or convenience, for money. For example, a person could live near town, and pay more for rent or his domicile, or live farther away and pay less, "paying the difference out of his convenience".

This view, that the primary trade-off involved in economics is between time and money, has several challengers. Each of these bases its view of scarcity on a different fundamental trade-off. A small number of economists prefer to define economics as the study of how and why people trade; this definition implies relative scarcity.

In economic theory, the price level is determined by the "marginal" cost and "marginal" utility. Marginalism became increasingly important in economic theory in the late 19th century, and is a tool which is used to analyze how economic systems will react. The marginal cost of a commodity is the cost to produce the last unit of it, the marginal utility is the happiness gained from buying the last unit. Economic theory uses marginalism to describe the "diminishing returns" from consumption - the 10th candy bar doesn't taste as good as the first, and so brings less "marginal utility". Marginal cost of production divides costs into "fixed" costs which must be paid regardless of how many of a commodity are produced, and "variable costs". The marginal cost is the variable cost of the last unit, plus the percentage of fixed costs. Marginalism states that when the profit from the next unit will be zero, that unit will not be produced.

Information theory has been applied to economics since the work of Ronald Coase in the 1930's. However, with Herbert Simon and John von Neumann in the 1950's, it gathered a more specific formalism as part of game theory. This emphasises that the decision-making process itself is costly.

Marxist economics generally denies the trade-off of time for money. In the Marxist view, concentrated control over the means of production is the basis for the allocation of resources among classes. Scarcity of any particular physical resource is subsidiary to the central question of power relationships embedded in the means of production.

The question of the environment is viewed, in the traditional economic framework, as being related to the externalization of costs. That is, market economics assumes that a good which is underpriced, is overconsumed. Externalization of cost, in this view, will be corrected by pricing the overconsumed resources which are being used, for example the work of Lester Thurow and also see Pigovian taxes. Not all economics study accepts this paradigm, and, instead, there is a seven decade old tradition of viewing economic relationships as being based on the scarcity of energy, rather than price, as the central feature of economics.

Value Theory

It could be argued that beneath an economic theory is a theory of value. Value can be defined as the underlying activity which economics describes and measures. It is what is "really" happening.

Adam Smith defined "labor" as the underlying source of value, and "the labor theory of value" underlies the work of Karl Marx, Ricardo and many other "classical" economists. The "labor theory of value" argues that a good or service is worth the labor that it takes to produce, and the abundance or scarcity of labor determines the price of a commodity. The labor theory of value and the closely related cost-of-production theory of value dominates the work of most classical economists, but they are far from the only accepted basis for "value". For example neoclassical economists and Austrian School economists prefer the marginal theory of value.

"Market theory" argues that there is no "value" separate from price, that the market incorporates all available information into price, and that so long as markets are open, that price and value are one and the same. This theory rests on the idea of the "rational economic actor". This was originally asserted by Mill.

Another set of theories rest on the idea that there is a basic external scarcity, and that "value" represents the relationship to that basic scarcity. Theories based on economics being limited by energy or based on a "gold standard" are of this type.

All of these value theories are used in current economic work.

Price

Price is the measurable quantities involved in an exchange. Price theory, therefore, charts the movement of measurable quantities over time, and the relationship between price and other measurable variables. In Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* this was the trade-off between price and convenience. A great deal of economic theory is based around prices and the theory of supply and demand.

Supply and demand assume that the factors affecting the agents who supply a particular commodity can be separated from those who wish to sell it. Sellers have a quantity they would wish to sell at every given price and a price for any quantity they wish to sell; buyers have a quantity they will demand at any given price and a price that is acceptable to them if they have to buy a particular quantity.

The market 'clears' at the point where all the supply and demand at a given price balance. That is, the amount of a commodity available at a given price equals the amount that buyers are willing to purchase at that price. It is assumed that there is a process that will result in the market reaching this point, but exactly what the process is in a real situation is an ongoing subject of research. Markets which do not clear will react in some way, either by a change in price, or in the amount produced, or in the amount demanded. Graphically the situation can be represented by two curves; one showing the price-quantity combinations acceptable to buyers, or the demand curve, one showing the combinations acceptable to sellers, or the supply curve. The market clears where the two are in equilibrium, that is where the curves intersect. In a general equilibrium model, all markets in all goods clear simultaneously and the 'price' can be described entirely in terms of tradeoffs with other goods. For a century the Say's Law was believed in economic theory, which said that markets, as a whole, would always clear.

In many practical economic models, some form of "price stickiness" is incorporated to model the observed fact that in many markets prices do not move fluidly. Economic policy often revolves around arguments as to what is causing "economic friction", or price stickiness, and which is, therefore, preventing the supply and demand from reaching equilibrium.

Another area of economic controversy is on whether price measures value correctly. In mainstream market economics, where there are significant scarcities not factored into price, there is said to be an externalization of cost. Market economics predicts that scarce goods which are under-priced are over-consumed (See social cost). This leads into public goods theory.

Economics and other disciplines

There is some degree of tension between economics and ethics, another of the most basic social sciences, which tends to avoid quantification and emphasize balances of rights. Modern economics deals with this tension explicitly – according to some thinkers a theory of economics is also, or implies also, a theory of moral reasoning. One way

economists deal with this is to qualify discussions of economic choice by noting that "all else being equal..." referring to moral or social factors that are supposedly held equivalent for all choices that one might make. For exploration of this issue, see the moral purchasing article.

Another premise is that economics fits within a finite ecosystem where there are at least some abundant resources – for instance, when fueling a fire one is usually concerned with finding the wood, and not so much with finding the air to burn it with. Economics explicitly does not deal with free abundant inputs – one criticism is that it often conflicts with ecology's view of what affects what. Human beings are, according to ecologists, merely one species participating in a vast energy system on this planet – economy is a subset of ecology that deals with just one species' habits and wants. See nature's services for the economic view of ecology and green economics for the view wherein economics is a subset of ecology.

A third premise is that economics suggests market forms and other means of distribution of scarce goods that do not just affect "desires and wants" but also "needs" and "habits". Much of so-called economic "choice" is involuntary, certainly given the conditioning that people have to expect certain quality of life. This leads to one of the most hotly debated areas in economic policy: namely the effect and efficacy of welfare policies. This is viewed as a failure to respect economics reasoning by libertarians, who argue that redistribution of wealth is morally and economically wrong. And viewed as a failure of economics to respect society by socialists, who argue that disparities of wealth should not have been allowed in the first place. This led to both 19th century labour economics and 20th century welfare economics before being subsumed into human development theory.

The debates above are all quite old. The term economics was coined in around 1870, and popularised by influential "neoclassical" economists such as Alfred Marshall. Prior to this the subject had been known as political economy and referred to "the economy of politics" – competing states. The older term is still often used instead of economics, especially by radical economists such as Marxists who strongly question assumptions of "mainstream" technical and quantitative economics. Use of this term often signals an a basic disagreement with the terminology or paradigm of market economics. Political economy explicitly brings political considerations into economic analysis and therefore tends to be more normative. Some mainstream universities (such as the University of Toronto and many in the United Kingdom) have a political economy department rather than an economics department.

See also

Microeconomics

Microeconomics — Supply and Demand — Consumer Theory — Production theory — Experimental economics — Behavioral economics — General equilibrium — Industrial organization — Financial economics — Managerial economics — International trade — Labor economics — Development economics — Environmental economics — Welfare

economics — Public choice theory — Public goods — Transport economics — Health economics — Marginal demand

Macroeconomics

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Methodology

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History of economic thought — Economic history — Praxeology — Political economy — Political science — Economic geography — Finance — Operations research — Economic anthropology — Public finance — Home economics — Neuroeconomics

Critics

Steve_Keen

Selected topics

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Economics Directory

Bureau of Labor Statistics American Labor Department's statistical division.

World Bank's Data Web Page

US Department of Commerce Economics Statistics

World Lecture Hall Economics Section

Essential Principles of Economics Text in Progress on Economics

Economics Resources on the Net

National Bureau of Economic Research Economics material from the organization that declares Recessions and Recoveries.

The library of economics and liberty, a site with numerous articles and essays written by well-known economists

St Louis Federal Reserve Gateway to the Federal Reserve, including working papers, links to lectures and other material.

David Friedman's Price Theory Text Entire text on-line.

Brief Introduction to Macroeconomics by Paul Krugman

Paul Krugman's Page, including the essay There's something about macro.

LibertyForums – Classical Liberal, Libertarian & Objectivist Discussion Board

The National Voluntary Content. ERIC Digests.

Recent Trends in Economic Education. ERIC Digest.

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by Glenn LaFollette. Dustin Lindsey looked like he was getting his first haircut before he picked up the pen. Once he put on the ...

Political brain driven by emotion

The Emory Wheel -

... the rational parts of their brain, partisans tended to process the contradictions of the candidate from their party with parts typically associated with emotion ...

Central's 'Steel Magnolias' has humor and palpable emotion

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... Quite ironic that high school students should portray on stage the heart-rending emotion of a parent living beyond her child. But ...

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ALCOHOL dampens down hundreds of genes in a part of the brain that regulates emotion and behaviour, new research has shown. The ...

FOOTBALL EUROPE: Germany awash with Ruhr emotion

noticias.info, Spain -

/noticias.info/ It takes around 30 minutes to get from Gelsenkirchen to Dortmund by car.

The two most significant football temples ...

In psychology, and in ordinary language, emotion is used to describe a state of a person. Examples of emotions are fear, anger, joy; see list of emotions. Emotional state is related to mood, sometimes even identified with it, although emotions are generally considered to be more transient than moods. Emotional state is sometimes thought of as being internal and unobservable. However, this is not an assertion which is supported by empirical evidence, since externally visible changes almost always accompany emotional changes. Emotion is also sometimes regarded as the antithesis of reason; as is suggested by phrases such as appeal to emotion or don't let your emotions take over. Again, there is no empirical support for any generalization of this kind: Indeed, anger or fear can often be thought of as a systematic response to observed facts. In any case, it should be clear that the relation between logic and argument on the one hand and emotion on the other, is one which merits careful study.

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Culture and emotion

It is not even clear whether emotion is a purely human phenomenon, since animals seem to exhibit conditions which resemble emotional responses such as anger, fear or sadness.

Much of what can be said about emotions, as well as the history of what has been said about them, is conditioned by culture and even politics. That is to say specific emotional responses may be influenced by cultural norms of propriety. This methodological relativity is entirely different from the question of whether emotions are universal or are culturally determined.

Mental health and emotion

Emotions are generally regarded as an indicator of mental health. For example a wide class of psychiatric disorders relating to mood are classified as affective disorders. Depression for instance, is an affective disorder with a range of symptoms such as the prolonged and painful experience of sadness. On the other hand individuals that are incapable of experiencing emotions such as sadness or anger are referred to as suffering from emotional poverty reflective of many personality disorders.

Common views on emotions

Following are some propositions concerning the nature of emotions. Some of these assertions may be mutually contradictory. Nonetheless, they are an indicator of the wide range of beliefs on this subject:

An emotion is a mental state or process. This process can be conscious or subconscious, but in any case it attempts to balance and integrate various and often conflicting, facts, experiences and concepts.

It is a subjective, psychological experience, associated with a group of physiological reactions arising in response to some event. This experience is often held to be involuntary, although there appears to be no agreement on the extent to which one can learn to intentionally influence emotions.

Emotional experiences consist of thoughts, feelings, affective responses (e.g., sadness, anger, joy, determination), physiological responses (changes in internal bodily functioning), cognitive responses (e.g., a conceptual representation of an event), and behavioural responses (an outward expression such as flight or resistance).

Theories of emotions

Questions concerning the mystery of human emotion were the territory of a number of disciplines until the development of modern psychology. Over the last century, psychologically-based theories have provided influential, if incomplete explanations of how emotional experience is produced.

The James-Lange theory proposes that conscious conclusions about what we are "feeling" form in reaction to physiological changes occurring in the body. This was proposed by William James and Carl Lange independently in the 1880s.

The Cannon-Bard Approach proposes that the lower brain initially receives emotion-producing information and then relays it simultaneously to the higher cortex for interpretation and to the nervous system to trigger physiological responses.

The Schacher-Singer Approach gives highest importance to the cognitive skills that create an interpretation of the situation and so provide a framework for the individual's behavioral response.

The Opponent-Process Approach views emotions as sets of pairs, one positive and one negative. When an emotion-producing stimulus is present, one of the pair is suppressed so that the more situationally appropriate emotion is felt intensely.

The feeling component of emotion encompasses a vast spectrum of possible

responses. Psychologists have attempted to offer general classifications of these responses, and as with the colour spectrum, systematically distinguishing between them largely depends on the level of precision desired. One of the most influential classification approaches is Robert Plutchik's eight primary emotions - anger, fear, sadness, disgust, surprise, curiosity, acceptance and joy. Plutchik argues for the primacy of these emotions by showing each to be the trigger of behaviour with high survival value (i.e. fear: fight or flight).

Principally involved in the physiological component of emotion are: the autonomic nervous system (ANS), the limbic system, and the hypothalamus. Fear, in particular learned fear, is thought to depend on the amygdala.

There is considerable debate as to whether emotions and emotional experiences are universal or culturally determined. One of the first modern attempts to classify emotions was Adam Smith's study, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. This book is based largely on data from Western Europe. Some anthropologists have explored the relationship between emotional disposition or expression and culture, most notably Ruth Benedict in her ethnological study, *Patterns of Culture*; Jean Briggs in her ethnography *Never in Anger*; Michelle Rosaldo in her ethnography *Knowledge and Passion*; Lila Abu-Lughod in her ethnography *Veiled Sentiments*; and Katherin Lutz in her ethnography *Unnatural Emotions*. Paul Ekman has found that some facial expressions of emotion appear to be culturally independent, as described in his book *Emotions Revealed*.

In his book *Descartes' Error*, the neurologist Antonio Damasio has developed a universal model for human emotions. This model is based on a rejection of the Cartesian body-mind dualism that he believes has crippled scientific attempts to understand human behaviour, and draws on psychological case-histories and his own neuropsychological experiments. He began with the assumption that human knowledge consists of dispositional representations stored in the brain. He thus defines thought as the process by which these representations are manipulated and ordered.

One of these representations, however, is of the body as a whole, based on information from the endocrine and peripheral nervous systems. Damasio thus defines "emotion" as: the combination of a mental evaluative process, simple or complex, with dispositional responses to that process, mostly toward the body proper, resulting in an emotional body state, but also toward the brain itself (neurotransmitter nuclei in the brain stem), resulting from additional mental changes.

Damasio distinguishes emotions from feelings, which he takes to be a more inclusive category. He argues that the brain is continually monitoring changes in the body, and that one "feels" an emotion when one experiences "such changes in juxtaposition to the mental images that initiated the cycle".

Damasio thus further distinguishes between "primary emotions", which he takes to be innate, and "secondary emotions," in which feelings allow people to form "systematic connections between categories of objects and situations, on the one hand, and primary emotions, on the other."

Damasio has suggested that the neurological mechanisms of emotion and feeling evolved in humans because they create strong biases to situationally appropriate behaviours that do not require conscious thought. He argued that the time-consuming process of rational thought often decreases one's chances of survival in situations that require instant decisions.

Daniel Goleman and other investigators have researched what is entailed in the abilities to manage one's own and other people's emotions. See Emotional intelligence.

Nussbaum on emotion

Philosophers have considered the problem of emotions from a number of different angles, and in recent years have attempted to integrate, or at least relate, accounts of emotion found in literature, psychoanalysis, behavioural psychology, neurobiology and in the philosophical literature itself. Martha Nussbaum, to take one example, has issued a recent challenge to theorists of emotion who understand emotions to be irrational states grafted onto a rational, emotionless thought process. This understanding of emotions may be considered the epiphenomenal account; emotions may be the end-product of cognitive processes -- such as a feeling of anger upon realizing that one's been cheated -- but they can never take their place among other mental states, such as believing, as equals. In this account, one may, for example, reason perfectly well about an ethical quandary without experiencing emotion.

In Nussbaum's account, emotions are essentially cognitive states of a subject; what distinguishes emotions from other thoughts is that they refer to events or states in the world that directly relate to what she terms the individual's own self-flourishing. Here, self-flourishing refers to a constellation of concepts taken from the Aristotelian notion of Eudaimonia.

Nussbaum's primary goal in her recent work on emotion is to support this cognitive account of emotions against the epiphenomenal account by showing how emotions both have a logic -- can be considered to follow coherently or not upon one another -- and are directly responsive to external facts. For Nussbaum, the fact that the emotion of jealousy can coexist with that of love, but not with that of, say, friendly-feeling, is a consequence of their cognitive properties. Accounts of psychoanalysis and of the sequence of emotions experienced when listening to music are also, in Nussbaum's view, supportive of the cognitivist account.

See also Emotion theory, List of emotions, Empathy

Further reading

Task Force on DSM-IV ,Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders : DSM-IV, American Psychiatric Association

Martha C. Nussbaum, Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions, Cambridge

University Press, November, 2001, hardcover, 751 pages, ISBN 0521462029; trade paperback, April, 2003, ISBN 0521531829
Martha C. Nussbaum, *Therapy of Desire*, Princeton University Press, 1994.
Antonio Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain*, Harcourt, February, 2003, hardcover, 320 pages, ISBN 0151005575; trade paperback, December, 2003, 368 pages, ISBN 0156028719

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/infertility>

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Infertility

In the news

Medicine gives life a helping hand

Trenton Times, NJ -

By JOHN CRAWFORD. Every year, IVF New Jersey would hold a holiday party to which the infertility practice invited former patients. It was a warm occasion. ...

Greenpeace Calls on EU To Tighten Regulations on Chemical Industry ...

Kaiser network.org, DC -

... the report, "On average, a typical Western man produces half the sperm his father or grandfather did." In addition, the report finds that infertility affects 15 ...

Male pill doesn't cause infertility

Moneycontrol.com, India -

A study on a prototype contraception says that worries of the male pill hindering a man's chance of fathering a child are unfounded. ...

Male Pill doesn't cause infertility

Moneycontrol.com, India -

Paris: A study on the prototype contraception says that worries of the male pill hindering a man's chance of fathering a child are unfounded. ...

Infertility Carries Stigma Culturally - Medics

Mmegi, Botswana -

Infertility is a health problem that puts a lot of pressure on women in our culture, said Dr Habaudi Hobona, a private surgeon in Francistown. ...

Infertility is the inability of a couple to naturally conceive, carry or deliver a healthy child.

The International Council on Infertility Information Dissemination (INCIID) considers a couple to be infertile if they have not conceived "after a year of unprotected intercourse

in women under 35, or after six months in women over 35" [1] or if they are incapable of carrying a pregnancy to term.

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1.2 Male infertility

2 Treatment

3 Ethics

4 External Links

Causes

According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, infertility affects about 6.1 million people in the U.S., equivalent to ten percent of the reproductive age population. Female infertility accounts for one third of infertility cases, male infertility for another third, combined male and female infertility for another 15%, and the remainder of cases are "unexplained". [1] "

Female infertility

Factors relating to female infertility include:

Problems with ovulation

Blocked fallopian tubes; this can happen as the result of pelvic inflammatory disease, endometriosis, or an ectopic pregnancy

Hormonal problems such as Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS)

Inability of the fertilized egg to implant in the uterus

Inability to carry a pregnancy to term

Genetic abnormalities, such as Turner syndrome

Age. A woman's fertility declines after the age of 30, both in her ability to conceive and her ability to carry a pregnancy to term.

Male infertility

The chief factor in male infertility is sperm quality; the man may be producing few or no

sperm (conditions known as oligospermia and azoospermia respectively), or the sperm that he produces may have poor motility (affecting its ability to reach the egg). Alcohol and drug abuse can affect sperm quality. Other possible factors include erectile dysfunction and retrograde ejaculation. Age is also believed to affect male fertility.

Treatment

There are various treatments for infertility, depending what the problem is. These treatments include:

Fertility drugs to assist with problems ovulating. One example would be Clomiphene Citrate (Clomid, Serophene), which stimulates ovulation.

Surgery to fix problems such as blocked fallopian tubes.

In vitro fertilization (IVF) in which eggs are removed from the woman, fertilized and then placed in the woman's uterus, bypassing the fallopian tubes. Children produced this way are popularly known as test-tube babies.

Gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT) in which eggs are removed from the woman, and placed in one of the fallopian tubes, along with the man's sperm. This allows fertilization to take place inside the woman's body.

Zygote intrafallopian transfer (ZIFT) in which eggs are removed from the woman, fertilized and then placed in the woman's fallopian tubes rather than the uterus.

Egg donation by another woman (in combination with IVF, GIFT or ZIFT). This happens when a woman's eggs are unusable, or she has a genetic disease that she does not want to run the risk of passing on.

Donor insemination which involves the woman being artificially inseminated with donor sperm.

Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) in which a single sperm is injected directly into an egg; the fertilized egg is then placed in the woman's uterus using IVF.

Using a surrogate mother to carry the child.

Ethics

There are many ethical issues associated with infertility and its treatment, particular with regard to any treatment involving embryos.

Recent increases over the last few years in the number of multiple births (the best known being the McCaughey Septuplets) have also provoked concern; the greater the number of babies in a single pregnancy, the more likely they are to have a low birth weight, to be born prematurely and to consequently suffer medical problems.

Some religions (e.g. Catholicism) frown on some or all fertility treatments. Other issues include whether infertility treatment should be funded through health care.

External Links

American Society for Reproductive Medicine

International Council on Infertility Information Dissemination (INCIID)

[<http://www.drmaalpani.com/book> How to Have a Baby - A Guide for the Infertile Couple.

Free online book to help couples conceive

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/fertility-rate>

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Fertility Rate

In the news

Australia's fertility rate on the rise

The Age (subscription), Australia -

... A total of 254,200 babies were born, increasing the national fertility rate to 1.77 babies per woman, up from 1.75 in 2003. Some ...

Govt bid to ensure girls wed after 18

Newindpress, India -

The Health Ministry hopes this will help reduce infant and maternal mortality and bring down India's fertility rate. The ministry ...

Slovenia ranks last in fertility rate among EU countries

People's Daily Online, China -

Slovenia ranked last in fertility rate among the 25 EU member countries in 2004, with its women on average having only 1.22 children in their lifetime, said ...

Blame poverty on high fertility rate — report

New Vision, Uganda -

A HIGH fertility rate, coupled with poor access to contraception, is the cause of the country's high population growth, which is in turn responsible for the ...

Whatever happened to the teeming millions?

People & the Planet, UK -

... the Government Actuary's Department suggest that, with zero net immigration (ie numbers of immigrants and emigrants in balance) and a fertility rate of 1.55 ...

The fertility rate for a certain society is calculated as the number of child births per woman. The Sub-replacement fertility rate is usually at 2.1 births per woman, below this rate populations will not grow through reproduction.

Developed countries usually have a much lower fertility rate due to higher living standards. Death rates are low, birth control is easily accessible, and children often become an economic drain caused by education costs, clothing and feeding. In developing countries on the other hand, children are a necessity as labour in fields and as carers and providers of their parents in old age. Fertility rates are also higher due to the lack of access to contraceptives.

redirect

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Witchcraft

In the news

Church to tackle child abuse and witchcraft

Edware Times, UK -

A Brent Cross church is calling world church leaders and speakers to address the issue of witchcraft within Britain's African evangelical churches. ...

Coffee, tea, a touch of witchcraft

Charlotte Observer, NC -

They don't wear pointy hats or ride broomsticks. They look pretty ordinary and don't talk about their religious beliefs to everybody they meet. ...

Witchcraft at the Half-Way-Tree court?

radiojamaica.com, Jamaica -

A woman constable attached to the Half-Way-Tree Police Station had to seek medical attention Tuesday after she came in contact with a strange powdery substance ...

Angola : Churches Want Committee To Fight Witchcraft

African News Dimension, South Africa -

Churches based in Angola want to create an inter-sectoral committee to fight witchcraft, said the co-ordinator of the preparatory commission, Rev. ...

Canada Opens First "Hogwarts" Witchcraft School

Lifesite, NY -

... LifeSiteNews.com) – It would seem there is truth to the warnings against the Harry Potter series if the opening of an honest-to-goodness witchcraft school in ...

European Christians in the medieval era, some conservative Christians today, Neopagans and many African religions (past and present) believe that witchcraft is a

form of genuine magic which can produce effects that are beyond the natural powers of man. However, the ways they characterize it differ widely.

This article will examine witchcraft in its historical and anthropological contexts. For witchcraft in the modern Western world as practised by neopagans see the article [The Craft and Wicca](#).

In colloquial use, the word witch is now applied almost exclusively to women, though in earlier English it applied to men as well. Most people would now call male witches sorcerers, wizards, or warlocks. Wiccans continue to use the term witch for all who practice witchcraft. Warlock is considered an insult among Wiccans and Neopagans.

The etymological roots could be several: among the candidates are German *weihen* ("consecrate") as well as the English word "victim" in its original meaning for someone killed in a religious ritual. Thus, a "witch" would signify nothing else but an ancient type of priestess. The Old English words *wicca* (m.) and its feminine counterpart *wicce* both mean wizard and gave rise to the adjective "wicked". Wizard, again is thought to be related to the modern term "wise". A cautious interpretation gives us a witch being a woman of (presumably occult) knowledge.

The belief in witches has always existed in nearly every region of the world, including Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. In Western culture, the concept of a witch has existed since at least the days of the ancient Greeks, as witches figure prominently in many Greek tragedies.

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1.1 Witches in modern culture

2 Middle-eastern witchcraft

2.2 Ancient middle-eastern and near-eastern beliefs

2.3 Witchcraft in the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible, Old Testament)

2.4 Witchcraft in the New Testament

2.5 Jewish views of witchcraft

3 African witchcraft

4 Witchcraft and the paranormal

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6 External links

European witchcraft

The shamans of the Germanic peoples were female, and were called Wicces in Anglo-Saxon England and Völvas in Scandinavia. Naturally, the tradition of female shamans did not disappear immediately with the arrival of Christianity. The traditions were maintained, but the church condemned the women who practiced the ancient shamanism (and consequently elements of the old religion) as witches, and demonized them. Ultimately the Church tried to exterminate any women who could be suspected of maintaining the tradition (see witch hunt).

The Church's successful transformation of these socially important women into the modern concept "witch" can seen in the following law:

"We teach that every priest shall extinguish heathendom, and forbid wilweorthunga (fountain worship), and licwiglunga (incantations of the dead), and hwata (omens), and galdra (magic), and man worship, and the abominations that men exercise in various sorts of witchcraft, and in frithspottum (peace-enclosures) with elms and other trees, and with stones, and with many phantoms." (source: 16th Canon Law enacted under King Edgar in the 10th century)

The Shamans of the Germanic peoples, the so-called Wicces (Witches) or Völvas practiced the seid. They served as healers, diviners and spiritual advisors before the arrival of Christianity. As competitors to the Roman Catholic Church they were demonized and persecuted in witch hunts. Thus, little is really known about the survival of the practice of 'witchcraft' in Europe before modern times. In written records, people deemed 'witches' (not necessarily practitioners) were primarily women who practiced forms of herbal medicine, but became unpopular in their community for one reason or another and were singled out for the attentions of the Inquisition and persecuted. Charges of heresy or witchcraft were sometimes brought against people for political reasons. The accusation of 'practicing witchcraft' was usually allied with others, especially 'having sexual intercourse with the devil'.

While it is common to classify witches into one of three categories (white witch, black witch and hedgewitch), this is not a very accurate grouping as the concepts of good and evil are foreign to witches. A witch is neither good, nor evil, neither black nor white because all acts in themselves are relative and cannot therefore be classified one way or the other.

C.f.

Malleus Maleficarum
witchhunts
witchcraft trials
flying ointments
Image:Paganeu1.gif

Witches have often been imagined to have the power to fly on broomsticks or distaffs. This mural of a naked pagan sexuality/fertility goddess on a distaff suggests that the connection may have originally been a sexual one (sticks and staffs have long been common masturbation devices, orgasm is achieved by rubbing them between the legs against the clitoris). From Jones, Prudence and Pennick, Nigel: A history of pagan Europe.

Before the advent of Christianity, wicces served as spiritual advisors and healers (see Völva or shaman). This changed with the arrival of Christianity and the priests who regarded them as competitors. From the Middle ages and onwards to about the mid-19th century, witches were universally associated with evil, under the belief that the witch's magical powers were granted by Satan in exchange for the witch's soul. A few folk tales, however, refer to kindly witches. Many outrageous claims were made about the powers of witches, which include the ability to fly, to transform oneself or others into animals or other shapes, and to curse one's enemies. On the other hand, all these powers typically belong to those of the shaman, so these powers were associated with witches long before the arrival of Christianity.

It was extremely dangerous to be accused of being a "witch", since a common punishment was to be burnt at the stake. Both in North America and in Europe, thousands of people (mostly women), were put to death as witches at various points in history. Some of the worst witchhunts were in Germany, though there are documented cases of torture and murder in the name of stopping witchcraft in nearly every European country.

Most people who were killed as witches were probably hapless midwives, herbalists, widows, spinsters, social outcasts, or victims of revenge seekers. For example, some researchers wholly attribute the Salem witch trials in 1692 to rivalries between opposing political forces in Salem, Massachusetts. See the extensive discussion under witchhunts.

Witches in modern culture

In modern days, few people believe in witches that curse enemies, change shapes, or can fly. However, since the last half of the 1800s Neopagans (mostly Wiccans a subset of Neopagans), have called themselves witches and while most of western culture continues to assign negative connotations to the word, to a Wiccan, it is not a derogatory term, nor does it have anything to do with Satanism. In fact, many Wiccans wish to reclaim the term "witch" and make it positive. The term "white witch" is sometimes used to refer to an exclusively positive meaning of the word, although others reject this term feeling that it is racially insensitive.

In 1968, a group of radical politically active women formed a protest organization in the City of New York called W.I.T.C.H, standing for "Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy From Hell".

Today, witches are iconically associated with Halloween, though Wiccans actually celebrate Samhain. Both dates are the same, and are at least metaphorically similar in meaning. This is not coincidence. Christianity had a basic contempt for the supernatural overtones of the festival. The association between "witches" and Halloween most certainly came from vilification of practitioners of the Celtic celebration of the last harvest.

Witches also appear as villains in many 19th- and 20th-century fairy tales, folk tales and children's stories, such as "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs", "Hansel and Gretel", "Sleeping Beauty", and many other stories recorded by the Brothers Grimm. Such folktales typically portray witches as either remarkably ugly hags or remarkably beautiful young women. In the classic story *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum the villain is a bad witch but two good witches play important roles as well.

Witches have come into the mainstream in the last decade as well as common pop-culture figures. Teenage and young adult witches have been the focus or appeared in the movies "The Craft," "Practical Magic," and "Blair Witch Project 2" (the sequel to *The Blair Witch Project*), as well as the television programs "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," "Charmed," "Sabrina the Teenage Witch," and some episodes of "The X-Files." Such neo-Gothic portrayals bear little relationship to Wicca, or even a Christian view of witches. In almost all cases witches portrayed in movies and TV shows today are attractive women who have supernatural powers. In the Harry Potter universe, a witch is a female wizard.

Middle-eastern witchcraft

Ancient middle-eastern and near-eastern beliefs

The belief in witchcraft and its practice seem to have been widespread in the past. Both in ancient Egypt and in Babylonia it played a conspicuous part, as existing records plainly show. It will be sufficient to quote a short section from the Code of Hammurabi (about 2000 B.C.). It is there prescribed,

If a man has laid a charge of witchcraft and has not justified it, he upon whom the witchcraft is laid shall go to the holy river; he shall plunge into the holy river and if the holy river overcome him, he who accused him shall take to himself his house.

Witchcraft in the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible, Old Testament)

In the Bible references to witchcraft are frequent, and the strong condemnations of such practices which we read there do not seem to be based so much upon the supposition of fraud as upon the "abomination" of the magic in itself. (See Deuteronomy 18:11-12; Exodus 22:18, "wizards thou shalt not suffer to live" - A.V. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live".) The whole narrative of Saul's visit to the witch of En Dor (I Kings 28) implies the reality of the witch's evocation of the shade of Samuel; and from Leviticus 20:27: "A man or woman in whom there is a pythonical or divining spirit, dying let them die: they shall stone them: Their blood be upon them", we should naturally infer that the divining spirit was not a mere imposture.

Witchcraft in the New Testament

The prohibitions of sorcery in the New Testament leave the same impression (Galatians 5:20, compared with Revelations 21:8; 22:15; and Acts 8:9; 13:6). Supposing that the belief in witchcraft were an idle superstition, it would be strange that the suggestion should nowhere be made that the evil of these practices only lay in the pretending to the possession of powers which did not really exist.

Jewish views of witchcraft

Almost all modern day Jews view the practice of witchcraft as idolatry, a serious theological offense in Judaism. Jews believe that the practices associated with witchcraft and magic are in vain, as such magic and supernatural forces don't actually exist. The only supernatural belief Jews still maintain is the belief in God. It should be noted that a small number of Orthodox Jews who study Kabbalah (Jewish esoteric mysticism) do believe in magic; their practices use terminology that varies greatly from witchcraft, but the basic ideas (using supernatural forces to effect results in the physical world) are identical. Most Jews find such ideas ludicrous; since The Enlightenment most Jewish people have abandoned a belief in the Kabbalah.

Some Neopagans study and practice forms of magery based in sincerity between classical Jewish mysticism and the modern witchcraft uses. A reference on this subject is Ellen Cannon Reed's book "The Witches Qabala: The Pagan Path and the Tree of Life".

See also: Christian views on witchcraft

African witchcraft

Africans have a wider range of views, some believing the same things that Christians do, while others believing that witchcraft may be value-neutral, or perhaps even used for good. The African practice led to the term witch doctor. The African practice led to several related religions in the Americas. See Voudun, Obeah, Candomble, Santería.

(Need to also discuss Obeah, Candomble, Voudun in more detail)

Witchcraft and the paranormal

It is not easy to draw a clear distinction between magic and witchcraft. Both are concerned with the producing of effects beyond the natural powers of man by agencies other than the Divine (occultism). But in witchcraft, as commonly understood, there is involved the idea of a diabolical pact or at least an appeal to the intervention of the spirits of evil. In such cases this supernatural aid is usually invoked either to compass the death of some obnoxious person, or to awaken the passion of love in those who are the objects of desire, or to call up the dead, or to bring calamity or impotence upon

enemies, rivals, and fancied oppressors. This is not an exhaustive enumeration, but these represent some of the principal purposes that witchcraft has been made to serve at nearly all periods of the world's history.

In the traditional European belief, not only of the dark ages, but of post-Reformation times, the witches or wizards addicted to such practices entered into a compact with Satan, adjured Jesus Christ and the sacraments, observed "the witches' sabbath" - performing infernal rites which often took the shape of a parody of the Mass or the offices of the Church - paid Divine honour to the Prince of Darkness, and in return received from him preternatural powers, such as those of riding through the air on a broomstick, assuming different shapes at will, and tormenting their chosen victims, while an imp or "familiar spirit" was placed at their disposal, able and willing to perform any service that might be needed to further their nefarious purposes.

Another belief is that those who practice witchcraft are being vague and deceptive. This view holds that while those who practice witchcraft may have the intention of helping people, in the end they are working against the will of God. Both "good" and "bad" witchcraft are condemned. In addition, one who practices witchcraft need not necessarily contact any supernatural beings. They may simply be using moods, lighting, and manipulating the situation to give the appearance of contact with the dead. They may even use ventriloquism to make it seem as if a being has entered a room. An example cited is the biblical story of the witch of En Dor (I Samuel 28) who, when she was successful in bringing up Samuel from the dead, screamed out in surprise and fear. Some use this passage to imply that the witch did not really expect a being to appear and was shocked and afraid when a being did appear. The conclusion is that in the past she had simply faked the appearances.

Modern science has found no evidence to support the claims witchcraft makes about the world or its own efficacy. Witchcraft as practiced by some Neopagans is, however, very similar to and supported by the findings of psychology. This is, however, a minority practice and not what is usually meant by the term Witchcraft.

See also
Catalan mythology about witches
familiar
flying ointment
list of Wiccans
Malleus Maleficarum
osculum infame
Seid (shamanic magic)
witchcraft trial
witches (Discworld)
witchhunt
wyrđ

External links

<http://www.witches.net/legendaryandfolkwitches1.htm>

href="http://roswell.fortunecity.com/necronomicon/310/WitchCraft/witch6.html" class="external"><http://roswell.fortunecity.com/necronomicon/310/WitchCraft/witch6.html>

href="http://www.the-cauldron.fsnet.co.uk/greece_and_rome.html" class="external">http://www.the-cauldron.fsnet.co.uk/greece_and_rome.html

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/wicca>

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Wicca

In the news

Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe review

Boomtown, Denmark -

Large cats, hook-nosed, wart-infested Wicca devotees and a large wooden box full of clothes is a combination that would normally inspire little but confusion ...

Wiccan ways; Brooms, spells but no Satanism

Times-Mail (subscription), IN -

... The witches to which Setlak refers are practitioners of Wicca and other pagan religions who praise a god and goddess and not Jesus Christ or Buddha or Allah or ...

Ritualist Helps Empower Women Spiritually

Bay Area BusinessWoman News, CA -

"I knew that I wanted to help women transform through ritual after my first class in feminist Wicca," says Carolyn Hunt, a Wiccan priestess practicing in ...

Government defeated in religious hate law debate

Index on Censorship, UK -

... about the possibility that their speech - or film, or political statement - might provoke hatred against Muslims, or Jews, Buddhists or Wicca witch worshippers ...

Store discriminates, class leaders testify

The News Journal, DE -

... "What I told them is that we consider Wicca to be very, very dark," said ... "Satan is a Christian creation," says a wicca.com posting, "and they can keep him.". ...

For the pre-Christian wiccans see Volva. For the book series Wicca see Sweep and Circle Of Three. ---- The Enlarge

The "Goddess Symbol" with a star in the middle

Wicca is the most popular Neopagan religion, probably originally founded by the British civil servant Gerald Gardner starting in the 1930s though it was first openly revealed in 1951. Since its founding, various related Wiccan traditions have evolved, the original being Gardnerian Wicca, which is the name of the tradition that follows the specific beliefs and practices established by Gerald Gardner.

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1 Definition

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3 Beliefs and practices

4 Wiccan traditions

5 Morality

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Definition

The conventional wisdom is that the term wicca derives from the Indo-European root word of '*wic' & '*weik', meaning "to bend or shape." In Old English, wicca meant necromancer or male witch. Some contend that the term wicca is related to Old English witan, meaning wise man or counselor, but this is universally rejected by language scholars as false etymology. Nonetheless Wicca is often called the "Craft of the wise" as a result of this misconception.

It appears that the word may be untraceable beyond the Old English period. Derivation from the Indo-European roots '*wic' or '*weik' is seemingly incorrect by phonological understanding.

Though sometimes used interchangeably, "Wicca" and "Witchcraft" are not necessarily the same thing. The confusion comes, understandably, because both practitioners of Wicca and practitioners of witchcraft are often called witches. In addition, many, but not all, Wiccans practice what they call witchcraft and vice versa.

Wicca refers to the religion; the worship of the God & Goddess (or just Goddess), and the Sabbat and Esbat rituals. Witchcraft, or as it is sometimes called "The Craft", on the other hand, requires no belief in specific gods or goddesses and, is not a specific spiritual path, thus there could be Christian Witches. It is considered to be a learned

skill, referring to the casting of spells and the practice of magic or magick (the use of the "k" is to separate the term from stage magic). To add to the confusion the term witchcraft in popular older usage, or in a modern historical or anthropological context, means the use of black or evil magic, not something Wicca encourages at all.

See *The Craft or Witchcraft* for more details on these differences.

History of Wicca

The history of Wicca is a much debated topic. Gardner claimed that the religion was a survival of matriarchal religions of pre-historic Europe, taught to him by a woman named Dorothy Clutterbuck. Many believe he invented it himself, following the thesis of Dr. Margaret Murray and sources such as *Aradia: Gospel of the Witches* by Charles G. Leland, Freemasonry and ceremonial magic; and while Clutterbuck certainly existed, historian Ronald Hutton concluded that she is unlikely to have been involved in Gardner's Craft activities. There is good evidence, however, that while the ritual side of Wicca is undeniably styled after late Victorian era occultism; , the spiritual side is inspired by the old Pagan faiths, with Buddhist, and Hindu influences.

Gardner possibly had access to few traditional Pagan rites and the prevailing theory is that most of his rites were the result of his adapting the works of Aleister Crowley. Note, for example, the similarity between Gardner's "An it harm none, do what ye will" and Crowley's Thelemic "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law, Love is the law, love under will."

The idea of primitive matriarchal religions was popular in Gardner's day, both among academics (e.g., Erich Neumann, Margaret Murray) and amateurs such as Robert Graves. Later academics (e.g., JJ Bachofen, Carl Jung and Marija Gimbutas) continued research in this area, and later still Joseph Campbell, Ashley Montagu and others highly esteemed Gimbutas's work on the matrifocal cultures of Old Europe, but since her death her interpretation of the archaeological record has been called into question, and her theories of universal female deity are no longer considered credible in the mainstream. Some academics carry on research in this area (consider the 2003 World Congress on Matriarchal Studies), and many amateurs are enthusiastic about it, but most academics hold serious reservations.

It is important to the understanding of Wicca to realize that while Wicca as we understand it is modern, both the practice of magick and the worship of a Mother Goddess and a God or Horned God are ancient. It would be fair to say Gardner merely took the idea and ran with it. His claims that Wicca was the "Old Religion" are false, and probably has hindered, rather than helped, Wicca gain widespread acceptance.

Beliefs and practices

Most Wiccans worship two deities, the Goddess and the God sometimes known as the Horned God. Some traditions such as the Dianic Wiccans mainly worship the Goddess;

the God plays either no role, or a diminished role, in Dianism.

Wiccans celebrate eight main holidays: four cross-quarter days called Samhain, Beltane, Imbolc (or Imbolg or Oimelc) and Lammas (or Lughnasadh), as well as the solstices, Litha and Yule, and equinoxes, Ostara (or Eostar or Eostre) and Mabon (see Wheel of the Year). They also hold Esbats, which are rituals held at the full and new moon.

Generally, the names are of ancient Germanic or Celtic holidays held around the same time, although two do not have any historical precedent. Ritual observations may include mixtures of those holidays as well as others celebrated at the same time in other cultures; there are several ways to celebrate the holidays.

Some Wiccans join groups called covens, though others work alone and are called "solitaries." Some solitaries do, however, attend "gatherings" and other community events, but reserve their spiritual practices (Sabbats, Esbats, spell-casting, worship, magickal work, etc.) for when they are alone. Some Wiccans work with a community without being part of a coven.

Wiccans weddings can be called "bondings," "joinings," or "eclipses" but are most commonly called "handfastings." Some Wiccans observe an ancient Celtic practice of a trial marriage for a year and a day, which some Traditions hold should be contracted on Lammas (Lughnasadh), although this is far from universal.

A much sensationalized aspect of Wicca, particularly in Gardnerian Wicca, is that some Wiccans practice skyclad (naked). Though many Wiccans do this, many others do not. (Watch out for "clothing optional" gatherings) The normal attire of a Wiccan is a pure cotton robe, to symbolise bodily purity, and a cord, to symbolise interdependence and which is often used during rituals.

In usual rites the Wiccans assemble inside a magic circle, which is drawn out in a ritual manner. Prayers to the God and Goddess are said, and spells, are worked. Traditionally, the circle is followed by a meal. Before entering the circle, they normally fast for the day, and have a thorough wash.

Many Wiccans use a special set of altar tools in their rituals; these can include a broom (besom), cauldron, Chalice (goblet), wand, Book of Shadows, altar cloth, athame (personal knife), altar knife, boline, candles, and/or incense. Representations of the God/Goddess are often also used, which may be direct, representative, or abstract. Aspurgers are sometimes also used.

There are different thoughts in Wicca regarding the Elements. Some hold to the earlier Greek conception of the classical elements (air, fire, water, earth), while others recognize five elements: earth, air, water, fire, and spirit (akasha). It has been claimed that the points of the frequently worn pentagram symbol, the five pointed star, symbolise five elements. In either case, these are the elements of nature that symbolize different places, emotions, objects, and natural energies and forces. For instance, crystals and

stones are objects of the element earth, and seashells are objects of the water element. Each of the four cardinal elements, air, fire, water and earth, are commonly assigned a direction and a color:

Air: east, yellow

Fire: south, red

Water: west, blue

Earth: north, green

Elemental, directional correspondences, and colors may vary between traditions, however. It is common in the southern hemisphere, for instance, to associate the element fire with north (the direction of the equator) and earth with south (the direction of the nearest polar area.) Some Wiccan groups also modify the religious calendar to reflect local seasonal changes; for instance, in Australia Samhain might be celebrated on April 30th, and Beltane on October 31st to reflect the southern hemisphere's autumn and spring seasons.

Wiccan traditions

Most Wiccans keep a 'Book of Shadows' as a journal or diary which contains thoughts, spells, ideas, etc. These can be electronic (in a word processing program), a notebook, or purchased at a specialty store. (Stores such as these usually also have incense, tarot cards, candles, etc. and lots thereof.)

There are many traditions, sub-traditions, and lineages of Wicca; some of the more well-known are Gardnerian Wicca, Alexandrian Wicca, Dianic Wicca, Seax-Wica and Faery Wicca. Also worth mentioning is the Feri Tradition, though this is not always considered Wiccan.

A generally accepted and informative book describing the various "paths" within the American pagan community is Margot Adler's

Morality

Wiccan morality is ruled according to the Wiccan Rede, which (in part) states "An it harm none, do what ye will." ("An" is an archaic word meaning "if."). Others follow the slightly adapted Rede of "An it harm none do what ye will; if harm it does, do what ye must" This very simple code is central to the understanding that personal responsibility, rather than a religious authority, is where moral structure resides.

Many Wiccans also promote the Law of Threefold Return, or the idea that anything that one does may be returned to them threefold. In other words, good deeds are magnified back to the doer, but so are ill deeds.

Some Wiccans also follow, or at least consider, a set of 161 laws often referred to as Lady Sheba's Laws. Some find these rules to be outdated and counterproductive.

For a summary of Wiccan views on homosexuality, see Neopagan views of homosexuality.

See also
Neopaganism
New Age
Paganism
Pan-Wiccan
witch
witch trials
External links
Free articles on Wicca @ Spiritual.com.au
Church and School of Wicca
VZW Arcadia - Belgian Wiccan organization

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Hawaiian

In the news

One less Hawaiian Isle now

Concord Monitor, NH -

By LISA ARSENAULT. or the first time in 29 years, no Pu Pu Platters or Mai Tais were served at the Hawaiian Isle II on Hall Street yesterday. ...

Hawaiian Air wins on-time honors again

Pacific Business News, HI -

Hawaiian Airlines has the best on-time record of any US air carrier in the government's first service report of the year. The US ...

Group: Don't rebury Hawaiian artifacts

Monsters and Critics.com, UK -

HONOLULU, HI, United States (UPI) -- Artifacts found in a Hawaiian lava tube should be put on display and studied, not buried, a group of native Hawaiians said ...

'Lost' and found for island visitors

San Francisco Chronicle, USA -

... and an important briefcase, and the Kahala Mandarin Hotel was the scene of Jack's wedding (and coincidentally, the only location portrayed as Hawaiian in the ...

No resolution reached in missing Hawaiian artifacts case

KPUA, HI -

HONOLULU (AP) _ Lawyers did not reach an agreement over missing Hawaiian artifacts today after meeting with a judge in a closed-door session today. ...

Hawaiian could refer to

the Hawaiian language

the native Hawaiian people

a resident of the state of Hawaii. However, to avoid confusion, residents of the state normally do not refer to themselves as Hawaiian in this sense, unless they have, in fact some Hawaiian blood (see above). They might instead refer to themselves as kama`aina, meaning "child of the land", especially if born (or at least raised) in Hawai'i, as this term implies origin (or great familiarity), but not descent.

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Africa

In the news

New highlights in China-Africa comprehensive cooperation

Xinhua, China -

... Economic and trade cooperation, human resources development and people-to-people exchanges will be high on the agenda of future China-Africa all-round

...

Dumitru takes temporary job for South Africa

ESPN -

CAIRO, Jan 13 (Reuters) - Romanian coach Ted Dumitru has been given the task of leading South Africa to the African Nations Cup finals as a temporary job after ...

'Old boys' launch Africa Forum

News24, South Africa -

... patron. The veterans had formed the Africa Forum as an informal network to help strategise plans for the development of the continent. ...

Drought 'catastrophe' in Horn of Africa

Mail & Guardian Online, South Africa -

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) warned on Friday of an impending "humanitarian catastrophe" in the Horn of Africa where millions of people in ...

S.Africa's M&R says construction difficult in H1

Reuters South Africa, South Africa -

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - South African construction and engineering firm Murray & Roberts had a difficult first six months of its financial year but still ...

World map showing location of Africa

Africa is the world's second-largest continent in both area and population, after Asia. At c. 30,244,050 km² (11,677,240 mi²) including the islands, it covers 20.3% of the total land area on Earth, and with over 800 million human inhabitants it accounts for around one seventh of Earth's human population.

The ancient Romans used the name *Africa terra* — "land of the Afri" (plural, or "Afer" singular) — for the northern part of the continent, corresponding to modern-day Tunisia. The origin of Afer may be the Phoenician *`afar*, dust; the Afridi tribe, who dwelt in Northern Africa around the area of Carthage; Greek *aphrike*, without cold; or Latin *aprica*, sunny.

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6 Culture

7 Religion

8 Countries

9 List of countries/dependencies by population density

10 See also

11 External links

Map

image:africa_map_cia.png

See also: World map

.

Geography

Main article: Geography of Africa

History

Main article: History of Africa

Africa is home to the oldest inhabited territory on earth, and it is believed the human race originated from what is now this continent.

For most of humanity's history, Africa (and all other continents) had no nation states, and was instead inhabited by many small, loosely associated tribal groups, kingdomss, and families; while Egypt was probably the first nation state ever formed, much of sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of Ethiopia and the Nubian kingdom, remained effectively nation-state-less until quite recently. In the 14th century European explorers arrived in Africa. By bargaining with some local tribal leaders, Europeans were able to capture millions of Africans, and export them for labour around the world in what became known as the global slave trade. In the early 19th century the European imperial powers staged a massive "scramble for Africa" and occupied most of the continent, creating many colonial states. This occupation continued until the conclusion of the Second World War, after which all colonial states gradually obtained formal independence. Today, Africa is home to over 50 independent countries, many of which still have borders drawn during the era of European colonialism.

Image:colafrica.jpg

Map showing European claimants to the African continent

Politics

Africa is composed of 56 nations, the vast majority of which are republics that operate under some form of the presidential system of rule.

Since independence, African states have frequently been hampered by instability, corruption, violence, and authoritarianism. Until recently, few nations in Africa were able to sustain democratic governments, instead cycling through a series of brutal coups and military dictatorships.

Many of Africa's post-colonial political leaders were very poorly educated or ignorant on matters of governance, which led to great instability. Others were corrupt and dictatorial, outlawing opposition immediately upon assuming office, and suppressing the European-made constitutions and parliaments.

As well, many used the positions of power to re-ignite old tribal conflicts which had been suppressed under colonial rule. In many countries, the military was perceived as being the only group that could effectively maintain order and ruled most nations in Africa during the 70s and early 80s.

During the period from the early 1960s to the late 1980s Africa had over 70 coups and 13 presidential assassinations.

Cold War conflicts between The United States and the Soviet Union also played a role

in the instability. When a country became independent for the first time, it was often expected to align with one of the two superpowers. Many countries in Northern Africa received Soviet military aid, while many in Central and Southern Africa were supported by America or France.

Border and territorial disputes have also been common, with the European-imposed borders of many nations being widely contested through armed conflicts.

Failed government policies and political corruption have also resulted in many widespread famines, and significant portions of Africa remain with distribution systems unable to distribute enough food or water for the population to survive. The spread of dangerous diseases is also rampant, especially the deadly HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Despite numerous hardships, there have been some signs the continent has hope for the future. Democratic governments seem to be spreading, though are not yet the majority. As well, many nations have at least nominally recognized basic human rights for all citizens, and have created reasonably independent judiciaries.

As well, under pressure from international financial institutions like the IMF, many African governments have been able to turn their economies around, so that they have started to show positive growth according to conventional economic measurements after decades of negative or zero growth. It remains to be seen if such developments will be able to survive long term, however.

There are clear signs of increased networking among African organisations and states. In the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire), rather than rich, non-African countries intervening, about half-a-dozen neighbouring African countries got involved. The death toll, estimated by some to 3.5 million over five years, is very high. This might play a role similar to that of World War II for Europe, after which the people in the neighbouring countries decide to integrate their societies in such a way that war between them becomes as unthinkable as a war between, say, France and Germany would be today.

Political associations such as the African Union are also offering hope for greater co-operation and peace between the continent's many countries.

Demographics

Approximately 80% of Africans live south of the Sahara desert. The indigenous peoples of sub-Saharan Africa are generally referred to as Negroes (a term widely viewed as offensive or antiquated in many countries today), black Africans, or simply blacks, due to the generally dark brown skin color of these peoples. However, there is a wide variety of physical types found amongst the sub-Saharan African peoples (two particular extremes are the Masai who are known for their tall stature, and Pygmies who are among the world's shortest adults). Recent genetic studies indicate that the black

African population is indeed highly diverse, despite the perceived racial uniformity of the region.

Speakers of Bantu languages predominate in much of western, central, and southern Africa. In the Kalahari Desert of Southern Africa, a distinct people known as the Bushmen (also "San" or "Hottentots") have long been present.

While "African" and "black" are often viewed as synonymous in much of the West, a large minority of Africans, especially in the northern and southern portions of the continent, are not black Africans.

The peoples of North Africa are primarily descended from the speakers of Afro-Asiatic languages. These peoples include the ancient Egyptians, the Berbers, and Nubians who developed civilizations in North Africa during ancient times. The Semitic Phoenicians, and the European Greeks and Romans settled in North Africa as well. In the 600s, Muslim Arabs swept across North Africa from the east and conquered the entire region within a hundred years. The North Africans today are descended from indigenous North Africans such as the Berbers, Ancient Europeans, Arabs, and black Africans from south of the Sahara. In general the Arab speaking population is highly mixed, and individuals in North African countries range in appearance from black Africans to people who resemble many European whites.

Berber peoples remain a significant minority within Morocco and Algeria, and are also present in Tunisia and Libya. The Tuareg and other often nomadic peoples are the principal inhabitants of the Saharan interior of North Africa.

Peoples such as Ethiopians and Somalis are usually regarded as "black Africans", but historically are of mixed ancestry as well, and have links to both North African and sub-Saharan cultures. Several African nations, such as Sudan and Mauritania are divided between a mostly Arab north and a black African south (though many of the "Arabs" are essentially Arabized blacks or people of mixed origin).

Some areas of Eastern Africa, particularly the island of Zanzibar also received Arab and Asian Muslim settlers and merchants during the Middle Ages. Beginning in the 1500s, Europeans such as the Portuguese and Dutch began to establish trading posts and forts along the coasts of western and southern Africa. Eventually a large number of Dutch, augmented by French Huguenots and Germans settled in what is today South Africa. Their descendants, the Afrikaners, are the largest white group in South Africa today.

In the 1800s a second phase of colonization brought a large number of French and British settlers to Africa. The French settled in large numbers in Algeria and on a smaller scale in other areas of North and West Africa. The British settled in South Africa as well as the colony of Rhodesia and in the highlands of Kenya. Smaller numbers of European soldiers, businessmen, and officials also established themselves in administrative centers such as Nairobi and Dakar.

Decolonization during the 1960s often resulted in the mass exodus of European descended settlers out of Africa, especially in Algeria, Kenya, and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). However in South Africa, the white minority (10% of the population) largely remained in the country after the end of white rule in 1994. South Africa also has a community of mixed-race people Coloured people.

European colonization also brought sizeable groups of Asians, particularly people from the Indian subcontinent to British colonies. Large Indo-African communities are found in South Africa, and smaller ones are present in Kenya and Tanzania. A fairly large Indian community in Uganda was expelled by the dictator Idi Amin in 1972.

Africans profess a wide variety of religious beliefs. The two most widespread religious communities of Africa, Christianity and Islam, have their roots in Southwest Asia, and approximately 40% of all Africans are Christians and another 40% Muslims. Some Africans (in Ethiopia and Egypt) adopted Christianity in the early centuries of the Christian Era - before most of Europe. However, Christianity was introduced to most of western and southern Africa by European missionaries or settlers during the colonial period.

Islam largely arrived in Africa through the Arab conquest of the north, and later diffusion through the Sahara desert into the interior of Africa. Some Muslim communities were also established by seafarers on the eastern coast of Africa. Muslims were also among the Asian peoples who settled in British ruled Africa.

Roughly 20% of Africans follow indigenous African religions. A small number of Africans also have beliefs from the Judaic tradition (Falashas, Lemba).

African languages Afro-Asiatic languages (Add more on language...)

Culture

Most northern countries, from Egypt to Morocco, have people who largely associate themselves as part of the Arabic culture. To the south of the Sahara, there are many distinct cultural areas, sometimes quite small; a large part of those can be associated to the linguistic group Bantu.

List of African writers

African art

Religion

Africa is home to a wide variety of different religious groups. Christianity and Islam have a significant presence in many countries, while others retain regionally unique tribal beliefs and customs.

Countries

Eastern Africa

Burundi
Comoros
Djibouti
Eritrea
Ethiopia
Kenya
Rwanda
Seychelles
Somalia — Somaliland — Puntland — Southwestern Somalia
Uganda
United Republic of Tanzania

Central Africa

Cameroon
Central African Republic
Congo
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Equatorial Guinea
Gabon
São Tomé and Príncipe

Northern Africa (Some countries are included as part of the Middle East in some definitions of that term)

Algeria
Ceuta
Egypt
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Melilla
Morocco
Sudan
Tunisia
Western Sahara

Southern Africa

Angola
Botswana
Lesotho
Malawi
Mauritius
Mozambique
Namibia
Réunion
South Africa
Swaziland
Zambia
Zimbabwe
Western Africa

Benin
 Burkina Faso
 Cape Verde
 Chad
 Côte d'Ivoire
 The Gambia
 Ghana
 Guinea
 Guinea-Bissau
 Liberia
 Mali
 Mauritania
 Niger
 Nigeria
 Saint Helena
 Senegal
 Sierra Leone
 Togo

List of countries/dependencies by population density in inhabitants/km².

Saint Helena, being closest to Africa, has been included.

Egypt as a whole has been included, even though some of Egypt is located in Asia.

Unlike the figures in the country articles, the figures in this table are based on areas including inland water bodies (lakes, reservoirs, rivers) and may therefore be lower here.

country	pop. dens. (/km ²)	area (km ²)	population (2002-07-01 est.)
Mauritius	588	2,040	1,200,206
Mayotte (Fr.)	457	374	170,879
Réunion (Fr.)	296	2,512	743,981
Comoros	283	2,170	614,382
Rwanda	281	26,338	7,398,074
Burundi	229	27,830	6,373,002
Seychelles	176	455	80,098
São Tomé and Príncipe		170	1,001 170,372
Nigeria	141	923,768	129,934,911
Gambia	129	11,300	1,455,842
Uganda	105	236,040	24,699,073
Cape Verde	101	4,033	408,760
Togo	93	56,785	5,285,501
Malawi	90	118,480	10,701,824
Ghana	85	239,460	20,244,154
Sierra Leone	78	71,740	5,614,743
Lesotho	73	30,355	2,207,954

Egypt	71	1,001,450	70,712,345		
Morocco (excluding Western Sahara)	70	446,550		31,167,783	
Swaziland	65	17,363	1,123,605		
Benin	60	112,620	6,787,625		
Ethiopia	60	1,127,127	67,673,031		
Tunisia	60	163,610	9815,644		
Senegal	54	196,190	10,589,571		
Kenya	53	582,650	31,138,735		
Côte d'Ivoire	52	322,460	16,804,784		
Burkina Faso	46	274,200	12,603,185		
Tanzania	39	945,087	37,187,939		
Guinea-Bissau	37	36,120	1,345,479		
Eritrea	37	121,320	4,465,651		
South Africa	36	1,219,912	43,647,658		
Cameroon	34	475,440	16,184,748		
Guinea	32	245,857	7,775,065		
Liberia	30	111,370	3,288,198		
Zimbabwe	29	390,580	11,376,676		
Madagascar	28	587,040	16,473,477		
Mozambique	24	801,590	19,607,519		
Democratic Republic of the Congo	24	2,345,410		55,225,478	
Djibouti	21	23,000	472,810		
Equatorial Guinea	18	28,051	498,144		
Saint Helena (UK)	18	410	7,317		
Sudan	15	2,505,810	37,090,298		
Algeria	14	2,381,740	32,277,942		
Zambia	13	752,614	9,959,037		
Somalia	12	637,657	7,753,310		
Mali	9.1	1,240,000	11,340,480		
Republic of the Congo	8.7	342,000		2,958,448	
Angola	8.5	1,246,700	10,593,171		
Niger	8.4	1,267,000	10,639,744		
Chad	7.0	1,284,000	8,997,237		
Central African Republic	5.8	622,984		3,642,739	
Gabon	4.6	267,667	1,233,353		
Libya	3.1	1,759,540	5,368,585		
Mauritania	2.7	1,030,700	2,828,858		
Botswana	2.7	600,370	1,591,232		
Namibia	2.2	825,418	1,820,916		
Western Sahara (Morocco)	1.0	266,000		256,177	
TOTAL			841,627,750		

See also
Sub-Saharan Africa
African American
Black Canadian

African Languages

Ecology of Africa

External links

An Irish anarchist in Africa provides a readable and compelling, but biased, introduction to today's western Africa.

Teaching about Africa

Teaching about Africa. ERIC Digest.

The Contemporary Africa Database

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Europe

In the news

Woods joins Europe in lambasting America's world series takeover

Guardian Unlimited, UK -

Tiger Woods is unmatched as a player in the modern era but when it comes to assessing what built the most powerful brand in the sporting world it would be a ...

FA should learn from Europe

Telegraph.co.uk, United Kingdom -

... "There's a big difference in general with the organisational set-up in England as compared to Europe," said Olsson, during Uefa's anti-racism conference in ...

BNFL chiefs eye Europe for nuclear solutions

Scotsman, United Kingdom -

NUCLEAR industry chiefs have called on Brussels to pressure the government into devising a long-term solution to the radioactive waste problem. ...

Blair hails future of Europe

Scotsman, United Kingdom -

There has never been a better time to be optimistic about Europe and enthusiastic about Britain's place in it, Tony Blair is set to declare. ...

Can 'wow' factor make Hummer fit in Europe?

International Herald Tribune, France -

... ailing General Motors, which is seeking to offset slumping sales in the United States by increases abroad, and the Hummer, with a ticket price in Europe of as ...

redirect

See (and)

For the band of the same name, see [Europe \(band\)](#).

[Satellite Image of Europe](#)[Enlarge](#)

[Satellite Image of Europe](#)

Europe is a continent whose boundaries are generally regarded as being: the Atlantic Ocean in the west, the Arctic Ocean to the north, the Ural Mountains and Ural River (or Emba River) in the east, the Caspian Sea, Caucasus mountains (or the Kuma-Manych Depression) and Black Sea in the southeast, and the Mediterranean Sea to the south. Together with Asia, Europe forms the supercontinent Eurasia, of which Europe is the western fifth.

In terms of area, Europe is the world's second smallest continent, with an area of 10,400,000 km² (4,000,000 square miles), making it slightly larger than Australia.

In terms of population it is the third largest continent after Asia and Africa. The population of Europe in 2001 was estimated to be 666,498,000: roughly one seventh of the world's population.

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Etymology

According to Homer the name Europe (Greek: Ευρώπη) was originally given to central Greece. Later it stood for mainland Greece and by 500 BC its meaning was extended to all the lands of the north.

The term Europe is often said to derive from Greek words meaning broad (eurys) and

face (ops). Many, however, see a Semitic origin, pointing to the Semitic word *ereb* which means "sunset". From a Middle Eastern viewpoint, the sun sets over Europe: the lands to the west.

In ancient mythology, Europa was a Phoenician princess who was abducted by a bull-shaped Zeus.

History

Main article: History of Europe

Europe has a long history of great cultural and economic achievement, starting as far back as the Bronze Age. The origin of Western culture is generally attributed to the ancient Greeks, and the Roman Empire spanned the entire continent for many centuries. Following the decline of the Roman Empire, Europe entered a long period of stasis, referred to by enlightenment thinkers as the Dark Ages and by most modern historians, the Middle Ages. During this time isolated monastic communities in Ireland and elsewhere carefully safeguarded and compiled knowledge accumulated previously. The Dark Ages came to an end with the Renaissance and the New Monarchs, marking the start of a period of discovery, exploration, and increase in scientific knowledge. From the 15th century European nations, particularly Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands and Britain, built large colonial empires, with vast holdings in Africa, the Americas, and Asia. The Industrial Revolution started in Europe in the 18th century, leading to much greater general prosperity and a corresponding increase in population. After World War II, and until the end of the Cold War, Europe was divided into two major political and economic blocks: Communist nations in Eastern Europe and capitalistic countries in Western Europe. Around 1990 the Eastern block broke up.

Geography and Extent

Physical map

Physical map

Geographically Europe is a part of the larger landmass known as Eurasia. The continent begins at the Ural Mountains in Russia, which defines Europe's eastern boundary with Asia. The boundary with Asia continues along the Ural River, and the Caucasus Mountains to the south.

In practice the borders of Europe are often drawn with greater regard to political, economic, and other cultural considerations. This has led to there being several different "Europes" that are not always identical in size, including or excluding countries according to the definition of "Europe" used.

The idea of a European "continent" is not universally held. Some non-European geographical texts refer to a Eurasian Continent, or to a European "sub-continent", given that "Europe" is not surrounded by sea and is, in any case, much more a cultural than a geographically definable area. In the past concepts such as "Christendom" were

deemed more important.

Increasingly, the word "Europe" is being used as a synonym for the European Union (EU) and its member states. 25 European states currently belong to the EU. A number of other European states are negotiating for membership and several more are expected to begin negotiations in the future. Almost all European states are members of the Council of Europe, the exceptions being Belarus, the Holy See (Vatican City), Kazakhstan, and Monaco.

Independent Countries

Europe comprises the following independent countries (in alphabetical order):* Albania * Andorra * Armenia¹ * Austria * Azerbaijan² * Belarus * Belgium * Bosnia and Herzegovina * Bulgaria * Croatia * Czech Republic * Cyprus¹ * Denmark * Estonia * Finland * France * Georgia² * Germany * Greece * Hungary * Iceland * Ireland * Italy * Kazakhstan³ * Latvia * Liechtenstein * Lithuania * Luxembourg * Macedonia * Malta * Moldova * Monaco * Netherlands * Norway* Poland * Portugal * Romania * Russia⁴ * San Marino * Serbia and Montenegro * Slovakia * Slovenia * Spain * Sweden * Switzerland * Turkey⁵ * Ukraine * United Kingdom * Vatican City

Notes

1 This country is geographically in Asia, but it is considered a part of Europe for cultural and historical reasons.

2 This country lies partly in Europe according to definitions which consider the main watershed of the Caucasus as the boundary with Asia.

3 Kazakhstan's European territory consists of a portion west of the Ural River.

4 Those territories of Russia lying west of the Ural Mountains are considered as part of Europe.

5 European Turkey comprises territory to the west and north of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles straits.

Dependent Territories

The territories listed below are recognised as being culturally and geographically defined. Most have a degree of autonomy. In brackets is the state which administers the territory.

Faroe Islands (Denmark)

Gibraltar (UK)

Guernsey (UK)

Jan Mayen (Norway)

Jersey (UK)

Isle of Man (UK)

Svalbard (Norway)

Regions in Europe

See Regions of Europe

A colour-coded map showing the regions of Europe

A colour-coded map showing the regions of Europe

Western Europe (Red)

British Isles: United Kingdom, Ireland

French Region: France, Monaco

Benelux: Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg

Central Europe (Blue)

Alpine Countries: Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Slovenia

Visegrad Group: Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary

Eastern Europe (see Northern Eurasia) (Brown)

Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania

European CIS States: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Russia

Caucasus: Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia

Northern Europe (see Scandinavia) (Purple)

Nordic Countries: Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Denmark

Southern Europe (Green)

Iberian Peninsula (Red): Spain, Portugal, Andorra

Italian peninsula: Italy, Vatican City, San Marino

Balkan Peninsula: Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia & Montenegro, Albania, Macedonia, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria

Asia Minor: Turkey

Mediterranean States: Cyprus, Malta

See also

History of Europe

Transportation in Europe

Financial and social rankings of European countries

Area and population of European countries

Date of independence of European countries

Metropolitan cities of Europe

Alternative names of European cities

European Union

Euroregion

External links

Europe at Night at NASA's Earth Observatory

Regions of Europe

GeoHive Regions

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/scotland>

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Scotland

In the news

Bank of Scotland pays £4.5m to secure new finance boss

Guardian Unlimited, UK -

Guy Whittaker, the new finance director of Royal Bank of Scotland, is to receive £4.5m in cash and shares to buy him out of an incentive scheme at his ...

Website lends support to vulnerable individuals in Scotland

Computer Business Review, UK -

A new website has been launched in Scotland to lend support to vulnerable people and help them live independently in their own homes, according to a report by ...

Cancer cases in Scotland set to soar by up to 50 per cent

Scotsman, United Kingdom -

CASES of cancer in Scotland are set to soar by up to 50 per cent within a decade, a new report warns. Thousands more people will ...

Michalak to play through pain barrier against Scotland

Reuters.uk, UK -

... flyhalf Frederic Michalak said on Wednesday he would be playing through the pain barrier in his side's Six Nations opener against Scotland at Murrayfield on ...

Study to follow Scotland's health

BBC News, UK -

Researchers plan to recruit 50,000 people to take part in Generation Scotland, one of the largest-ever family healthcare projects in the UK. ...

Alternate uses. See Scotland (disambiguation).

Scotland, or in Gaelic, Alba, is a country (formerly an independent kingdom) of northwest Europe, occupying the northern third of the island of Great Britain.

Scotland was first united with England in 1603, when the Scottish King James the Sixth became James the First of England and Scotland. On March 26, 1707, the Scottish and English parliaments merged to form the Kingdom of Great Britain, which eventually became the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, though some aspects, notably Scotland's legal system, did remain separate. In 1999, Scotland received its own devolved home rule parliament to govern the country on purely domestic matters. Scotland is the second-largest nation in the United Kingdom (after England).

Scotland (Scots/English)

Alba (Gaelic)

The Saltire (or St Andrew's cross), the national flag of Scotland 150px

(In detail) (Full size)

Royal motto: Nemo me impune lacessit (Latin: No one provokes me with impunity)

Image:LocationScotland.png

Image:UKScotland.jpg

Scotland's location within the UK

Official languages English (de facto), Scots Gaelic, Scots

Capital Edinburgh

First Minister Jack McConnell MSP

Area

- Total

- % water Ranked 2nd

78,782 km²

1.9%

Population

- Total (2001)

- Density Ranked 2nd

5,062,011

64/km²

Establishment Kenneth MacAlpin, 843

Currency Pound Sterling (£) (GBP)

Time zone WET (UTC; UTC+1 in summer)

National anthem Flower of Scotland (unofficial)

NUTS 1: UKM

Internet TLD .uk

Calling Code 44

International call prefix 00

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Head of State

Queen Elizabeth II Head of State of the United Kingdom is descended from King James VI, the first Scottish monarch to also be King of England (James I of England from 1603). While some controversy has simmered amongst the Scottish public over her official title since her coronation (many believe that, logically, she should use the style "Elizabeth I"), the courts of Scotland have confirmed "Elizabeth II" as her official title. She has said that in future monarchs will follow the international ordinal tradition that, where a monarch reigns in a number of non-independent territories (or independent territories that agree to share a monarch) that each have a differing number of previous monarchs of the same name, the highest ordinal used in any of the territories is the one used across all. (Past Scottish-English monarchs such as James VI & I and James VII & II reigned over legally separate kingdoms and hence used a dual ordinal.)

Geography

Scotland comprises the northern part of the island of Great Britain; it is bordered on the south by England. The country consists of a mainland area plus several island groups, including [Shetland Islands|Shetland], [Orkney Islands|Orkney], and the Hebrides, divided into the Inner Hebrides and Outer Hebrides. Three main geographical and geological areas make up the mainland: from north to south, the generally mountainous Highlands, the low-lying Central Belt, and the hilly Southern Uplands. The majority of the Scottish population resides in the Central Belt, which contains three of the country's five main cities, and many large towns.

Geology

Tectonic Plate Movement

When vulcanism actively occurred in East Lothian, 350 million years ago, the rocks which now comprise Scotland lay close to the equator, and formed part of the newly

amalgamated supercontinent of Pangaea. The continental plates making up Pangaea continued to converge, and a major collision occurred with the continent of Gondwana. The northern and southern parts of the island of Great Britain became adjoined only 75 million years before the onset of volcanism in East Lothian. Before then, Scotland lay on the margin of the Laurentian continent, which included North America and Greenland. England and Wales lay some 40° of latitude further south, adjacent to Africa and South America in the Gondwanan continent. In the Early Ordovician, approximately 475 million years ago, England and Wales, on the Avalonian plate, rifted away from Gondwana and drifted northward towards Laurentia. The Iapetus Ocean, which separated the two land masses, began to close. By the mid-Silurian, about 420 million years ago, its margins had become attached along the Iapetus Suture, which roughly follows a line running West to East from the Solway Firth to Northumberland.

When the later episode of volcanism occurred, approximately 270 million years ago, Scotland still comprised part of Pangaea, but had drifted northward. East Lothian stood at about 8° North. Consolidation of Pangaea had continued so that the nearest ocean, the Tethys seaway, lay between Eurasia and Africa.

See <http://www.glg.ed.ac.uk/home/s9810658/eastlothian/plates/tectonics.html> and Geology of the United Kingdom.

Language

Almost all residents of Scotland speak English, although many speak various Scots dialects which differ markedly from Scottish Standard English. Approximately 2% of the population use Scots Gaelic as their language of every-day use, primarily in the northern and western regions of the country. Almost all Gaelic speakers also speak fluent English.

By the time of James VI's accession to the English throne the old Scottish Court and Parliament spoke Scots, also known as Lallans. Scots developed from the Anglian spoken in the Northumbrian kingdom of Bernicia, which in the 6th century conquered the Brythonic kingdom of Gododdin and renamed its capital of Dunedin to Edinburgh.

History

See also the main article: History of Scotland.

Historically, from at least the reign of David I (ruled 1124 - 1153), Scotland began to show a split into two cultural areas - the mainly Scots, latterly English-speaking Lowlands, and the mainly-Gaelic speaking Highlands. This caused divisions in the country where the Lowlands remained, historically, more influenced by the English to the south: the Lowlands lay more open to attack by invading armies from the south and absorbed English influence through their proximity to and their trading relations with their southern neighbours.

The clan system in Highland Scotland formed one of its more distinctive features.

Notable clans include Clan MacGregor, Clan MacDonald, Clan Mackenzie, Clan Mackie, Clan MacLeod, Clan Robertson, Clan Campbell and others.

Historically the Lowlands adopted a variant of the feudal system after the Norman Conquest of England, with families of Norman ancestry providing most of the monarchs after approximately 1100 AD. These families included the Stewart or Stuart, Bruce, Douglas, Porteous, and Murray or Moray families.

During the Wars of Scottish Independence (approximately 1290 - 1363) the Scottish people rose up against English rule, firstly, under the leadership of Sir William Wallace, and later, under that of Robert the Bruce. Bruce won a famous victory over the English at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

In 1603 the Scottish King James VI inherited the throne of England, and became James I of England. James moved to London and only returned once to Scotland. In 1707 the Scottish and English Parliaments signed a Treaty of Union. Implementing the treaty involved dissolving both the English and the Scottish Parliaments, and transferring all their powers to a new Parliament in London which then became the United Kingdom Parliament. A customs and currency union also took place.

This state of affairs continued until May 1999 when Scotland gained a new Scottish Parliament. Whereas the old Scottish parliament had functioned as a full national parliament of a sovereign state, the new parliament governs the country only on domestic matters, the United Kingdom parliament having retained responsibility for Scotland's defence, international relations and certain other areas.

Modern Scotland

Scotland comprises 32 unitary authority regions.

Popular folk-memory continues to divide Scotland into 33 traditional counties.

Scotland has six designated cities: in descending order of population size:

Glasgow

Edinburgh, the capital

Aberdeen

Dundee

Inverness

Stirling

Waterways in Scotland:

Major Rivers:

The Clyde, The Dee, The Don, The Forth, The Tay, The Tweed, The Spey, ...

Firths (estuaries)

Solway, Clyde, Lorn, Dornoch, Inverness, Moray, Tay, Forth

Sea Lochs (fjords)

Loch Linnhe, Loch Fyne, Loch Long, Loch Etive, Loch Sunart, Loch Nevis, Loch Hourn, Loch Broom

Freshwater Lochs (lakes) include:

Loch Ness, Loch Lomond, Loch Morar, Loch Tay, Loch Rannoch, Loch Awe, Loch Shiel, Loch Maree, The Lake of Menteith,...

Artificial & Enhanced waterways include:

Caledonian Canal, Crinan Canal, Forth & Clyde Canal, Union Canal

See Also Falkirk Wheel

Culture

Scotland has a civic culture distinct from that of the rest of the British Isles. It originates from various differences, some entrenched as part of the Act of Union, others facets of nationhood not readily defined but readily identifiable.

Scots Law

Scotland retains its own unique legal system, based on Roman law, which combines features of both civil law and common law. The terms of union with England specified the retention of separate systems. Scots Law differs from England's common law system.

Scottish Education

Scotland also has a separate Scottish education system. The Act of Union guaranteed the rights of the Scottish universities, but more importantly, Scotland became the first country since Sparta in classical Greece to implement a system of general public education. This began with the Education Act of 1696 and became compulsory for children from the implementation of the Education Act of 1872 onwards. As a result, for over two hundred years Scotland had a higher percentage of its population educated at primary, secondary and tertiary levels than any other country in Europe. The differences in education have manifested themselves in different ways, but most noticeably in the number of Scots who went on to become leaders in their fields during the 18th and 19th centuries.

School students in Scotland sit Higher exams rather than the English A-Level system. Also, a Scottish university's honours degree takes four years of study as opposed to three in the rest of the UK. The university systems in several Commonwealth countries show marked affinities with the Scottish rather than the English system.

Banking

Banking in Scotland also features unique characteristics. Although the Bank of England remains the central bank for the UK Government, three Scottish corporate banks still issue their own banknotes: (the Bank of Scotland, the Royal Bank of Scotland and the Clydesdale Bank). These notes have no status as legal tender in England, Wales or Northern Ireland. In Scotland, neither they nor the Bank of England's notes rank as legal tender (as Scots law lacks the concept), however banknotes issued by any of the four

banks meet with common acceptance. See British banknotes.

For a further discussion read Legal Tender

The modern system of branch banking (in which banks maintain a nationwide system of offices rather than one or two central offices) originated in Scotland. Only strong political pressure during the 19th century prevented the resultant strong banking system from taking over banking in England. However, although Scottish banks proved unwelcome in England at the time, their business model became widely copied, firstly in England and later in the rest of the world.

Sports

Scotland has many national sporting associations, such as the Scottish Football Association or the Scottish Rugby Union. This gives the country independent representation at many international sporting events such as the football World Cup. Scotland cannot compete in the Olympic Games independently however, and Scottish athletes must compete as part of the Great Britain team if they wish to take part. Scotland does however send its own team to compete in the Commonwealth Games.

Scotland also has its own sporting competitions distinct from the rest of the UK, such as the Scottish Football League.

Media

Scotland has distinct media from the rest of the UK. For example, it produces many national newspapers such as The Daily Record (Scotland's leading tabloid) and the two major broadsheets, The Herald based in Glasgow, and The Scotsman in Edinburgh. The Herald, formerly known as the Glasgow Herald, changed its name to promote a national rather than a regional identity. Sunday newspapers include the tabloid Sunday Mail (published by the Daily Record) and the Sunday Post, while the Sunday Herald and Scotland on Sunday have associations with The Herald and The Scotsman respectively. Regional dailies include The Courier and Advertiser in Dundee in the east, and The Press and Journal serving Aberdeen and the north.

Scotland has its own BBC services which include the national radio stations, BBC Radio Scotland and Gaelic language service, BBC Radio nan Gaidheal. There are also a number of BBC and independent local radio stations throughout the country. In addition to radio, BBC Scotland also runs two national television stations. Much of the output of BBC Scotland Television, such as news and current affairs programmes, and the Glasgow-based soap opera, River City, are intended for broadcast within Scotland, whilst others, such as drama and comedy programmes, aim at audiences throughout the UK and further afield. Sports coverage also differs, reflecting the fact that the country has its own football leagues, separate from those of England.

Three Independent Television stations (Scottish TV, Grampian TV and Border) also

broadcast in Scotland. Although they previously had independent existences, Scottish TV (serving the Central Lowlands) and Grampian (serving the Highlands and Islands) now belong to the same company (The Scottish Media Group) and resemble each other closely, apart from local news coverage. "Border" has had a more complex position, as it also has to serve neighbouring areas across the border in England, as well as the Isle of Man, and it now has separate news programs for each side of the border. Most of the independent television output equates to that transmitted in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with the exception of news and current affairs, sport, cultural and Gaelic language programming.

Other facets of Scottish Culture

Scotland retains its own distinct sense of nationhood. Academic research consistently shows that people in Scotland feel Scottish, whilst not necessarily feeling the need to see that translated into the establishment of a fully-independent Scottish nation-state.

Scotland also has its own unique family of languages and dialects, helping to foster a strong sense of "Scottish-ness". See Scots Language.

Scotland retains its own national church, separate from that of England. See Church of Scotland and the section on "Religion" elsewhere in this article.

These factors combine together to form a strong, readily identifiable Scottish civic culture.

Miscellaneous

Scotland's iconic claims to fame include:

Bagpipes

Robert Burns, Burns night, Burns supper

Haggis

Irn Bru

Kilts and Tartan

Loch Ness, said to contain the Loch Ness monster "Nessie".

Scotch whisky and its distilleries

Scottish Highlands (Cairngorms, Aviemore, Munros) and islands (Hebrides, Orkney, Shetland)

Hogmanay (New Year's Eve)

Scottish country dancing

Shortbread

Tweed, especially Harris Tweed

Religion

The Church of Scotland (often referred to as The Kirk) functions as the national church. It differs from the Church of England in that it has a Presbyterian form of church governance, not subject to state control. This goes back to the Scottish experience of

reformation, initiated in 1560 by John Knox. The Scottish Reformation in essence took place at a grassroots level, and the Scots chose Presbyterianism as their method of church government. This differs from the situation in England, where Henry the Eighth personally unleashed the English Reformation and chose the Episcopal system that survives to this day in the Church of England.

A number of other Christian denominationss exist in Scotland, amongst them Roman Catholicism, which made a comeback through immigration after Protestants brutally repressed it during the 16th to late 18th centuries. It has now become the largest faith outwith The Kirk. As well as The Kirk we find various other Protestant churches, including the Scottish Episcopal Church, which forms a full part of the Anglican Communion, and the Free Church of Scotland, a Presbyterian off-shoot from the established Church of Scotland.

Islam has the largest number of adherents outside of Christianity in Scotland, although its numbers remain very small.

Much of Scotland (particularly the West Central Belt around Glasgow) has experienced problems owing to the religious divide between Presbyterians and Catholics. This problem has historically manifested itself in a number of ways, particularly in employment and in football fanaticism. The problems associated with sectarianism in Scotland have diminished markedly compared with the past, although issues do remain to a certain degree.

Figures from the 2001 Census on Religion in Scotland:

Religion	Population
Church of Scotland >	42%
Roman Catholic >	16%
Other Christian >	7%
Islamic >	0.8%
Buddhist >	0.1%
Sikh >	0.1%
Judaism >	0.1%
Hindu >	0.1%
Other Religion >	0.5%
No Religion >	28%
No Answer >	5%

Politics

See main article: Politics of Scotland

Historically the politics of Scotland have reflected those of the UK as a whole, although with some differences. For example, besides the main UK-wide political parties (Labour, Conservatives and the Lib-Dems) a number of Scottish-specific parties operate. These include the Scottish Independence Party (SIP), the Scottish National Party (SNP), the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) and the Scottish Green Party. These parties became

more of a force in Scottish politics after the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1998.

The traditional political divides of left and right have also intersected with arguments over devolution, which all the UK-wide parties have supported to some degree throughout their history (although both Labour and the Conservatives have swithered a number of times between supporting and opposing it). However, now that devolution has occurred, the main argument about Scotland's constitutional status remains between those who support Scottish independence and those who oppose it.

The Scottish Economy

The Scottish economy comprises many different sectors. Oil remains important, although light engineering and shipbuilding have seen a decline in recent years, and the service sector (especially finance and call centres) has increased in importance. Rural activities like fishing and agriculture remain important, although the country's 'Silicon Glen' has also seen growth in the manufacture of computers and mobile phones. Scotch whisky production continues to have significance, as does the country's tourism industry.

Further Reference

See also :

[History of Scotland](#)

[Caledonia](#)

[Subdivisions of Scotland](#)

[List of burghs in Scotland](#)

[National parks \(Scotland\)](#)

[Traditional music of Scotland](#)

[Flower of Scotland](#)

[Wars of Scottish Independence](#)

[Historic houses in Scotland](#)

[Castles in Scotland](#)

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[Abbeys and priories in Scotland](#)

[Gardens in Scotland](#)

[List of Scottish Universities](#)

[Scots Law](#)

[List of Scots](#)

[List of Scottish writers](#)

[List of United Kingdom topics](#)

[For a list of kings of Scotland see the List of British monarchs and Scottish monarchs family tree](#)

[External links](#)

[Scotland Royalty - Kings & Queens of Scotland!](#)

[Scottish Executive](#)

Scottish Parliament

General Register Office for Scotland, where you may view census data

H.L. MacQueen, Scots Law and the Road to the New Ius Commune vol. 4.4 Electronic Journal of Comparative Law (December 2000)

Radio Scotland

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Voodoo

In the news

Woman Who Smuggled Skull In Luggage Bonds Out

Click10.com, FL -

... human head, from a male in Haiti for ... use as a part of her voodoo beliefs.". The Broward County medical examiner's office believes ...

Voodoo Head Can't Ward Off US Customs

New York Times, United States -

... Ms. Severe told the authorities she had obtained the head in Haiti for "use as a part of her voodoo beliefs," Special Agent Erick Hernandez wrote in an ...

Bill targets voodoo, bird flu

Atlanta Journal Constitution (subscription), USA -

... The bill's sponsor, Rep. Tom McCall (R-Elberton), said he also wants to keep live chickens for being sold for use in voodoo rituals. ...

Voodoo head found in air luggage

Webindia123, India -

... Severe stated that she had obtained the package, which contained a human head, from a male in Haiti for use as part of her voodoo beliefs, the US Attorney's ...

Voodoo priests at risk as bird flu hits Africa

Reuters AlertNet, UK -

COTONOU, Benin, Feb 14 (Reuters) - Priests who tear out the throats of live chickens in ritual sacrifices to Voodoo gods may risk contracting bird flu after ...

The term Voodoo (Vodun in Benin; also Vodou or other phonetically equivalent spellings in Haiti; Vudu in the Dominican Republic) is applied to the branches of a West African ancestor-based religious tradition with primary roots among the Fon-Ewe peoples of West Africa, in the country now known as Benin, formerly the Kingdom of Dahomey, where Vodun is today the national religion of more than 7 million people. In

addition to the Fon or Dahomeyan tradition which has remained in Africa, there are related traditions that put down roots in the New World during the days of the transatlantic African slave trade.

Besides Benin, African Vodun and its descendent practices may be found in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Brazil, Ghana, Haiti and Togo. The word vodun is the Fon-Ewe word for spirit.

The more or less "pure" Fon tradition in Cuba is known as La Regla Arara.

In Brazil, the Fon tradition among former slaves has given rise to the tradition known as Jeje Vodun.

New World Traditions

Haitian Vodou

Called Sevis Gine or "African Service" in Haiti, a Creolized form of Vodou is the primary culture and religion of the more than 8 million people of Haiti and the Haitian diaspora. Haitian Vodou also has strong elements from the Ibo and Kongo peoples of Central Africa and the Yoruba of Nigeria, though many different peoples or "nations" of Africa have representation in the liturgy of the Sevis Gine, as do the Taíno Indians, the original peoples of the island now known as Hispaniola

Haitian Creole forms of Vodou exist in Haiti (where it is native), the Dominican Republic, parts of Cuba, the United States, and other places that Haitian immigrants dispersed to over the years. It is similar to other African-diasporic religions such as Lukumi or Regla de Ocha (also known as Santería) in Cuba, Candomble and Umbanda in Brazil, all religions that evolved among descendants of transplanted Africans in the Americas.

History

The majority of the Africans who were brought as slaves to Haiti were from the Guinea Coast of West Africa, and their descendants are the primary practitioners of Vodou (those Africans brought to the southern US were primarily from the Kongo kingdom). The survival of the belief system in the New World is remarkable, although the traditions have changed with time. One of the largest differences however between African and Haitian Vodou is that the transplanted Africans of Haiti were obliged to disguise their lwa or spirits as Roman Catholic saints, a process called syncretism.

Most experts speculate that this was done in an attempt to hide their "pagan" religion from their masters who had forbidden them to practice it. To say that Haitian Vodou is simply a mix of West African religions with a veneer of Roman Catholicism would not be entirely correct. This would be ignoring numerous influences from the native Taíno Indians, as well as the evolutionary process that Vodou has undergone shaped by the volatile ferment of Haitian history. It would also be ignoring the large influence of European paganism in Roman Catholicism and its pantheon of saints itself.

Vodou as we know it in Haiti and the Haitian diaspora today is the result of the pressures of many different cultures and ethnicities of people being uprooted from Africa and imported to Hispanola during the African slave trade. Under slavery, African culture and religion was suppressed, lineages were fragmented, and people pooled their religious knowledge and out of this fragmentation became culturally unified. In addition to combining the spirits of many different African and Indian nations, pieces of Roman Catholic liturgy have been incorporated to replace lost prayers or elements; in addition images of Catholic saints are used to represent various spirits or "misteh" ("mysteries", actually the preferred term in Haiti), and many saints themselves are honored in Vodou in their own right. This syncretism allows Vodou to encompass the African, the Indian, and the European ancestors in a whole and complete way. It is truly a "Kreyol" religion.

The most historically important Vodou ceremony in Haitian history was the Bwa Kayiman or Bois Caiman ceremony of August 1791 that began the Haitian Revolution, in which the spirit Ezili Dantor possessed a priestess and received a black pig as an offering, and all those present pledged themselves to the fight for freedom. This ceremony ultimately resulted in the liberation of the Haitian people from their French masters in 1804, and the establishment of the first black people's republic in the history of the world.

This Haitian Vodou came to the United States to a significant degree beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the waves of Haitian immigrants under the oppressive Duvalier regime, taking root in Miami, New York City, Chicago, and other cities mainly on the two coasts.

Beliefs

Haitian Vodouisants believe, in accordance with widespread African tradition, that there is one God who is the creator of all, referred to as "Bondje" (from the French "Bon Dieu" or "Good God", distinguished from the god of the whites in a dramatic speech by the houngan Boukman at Bwa Kayiman, but is often considered the same God the Roman Catholic Church talks about). Bondje is distant from his/her/its creation though, and so it is the spirits or the "mysteries", "saints", or "angels" that the Vodouisant turns to for help, as well as to the ancestors. The Vodouisant worships God, and serves the spirits, who are treated with honor and respect as elder members of a household might be. There are said to be twenty-one nations or "nanchons" of spirits, also sometimes called "lwa-yo". Some of the more important nations of lwa are the Rada, the Nago, and the Kongo. The spirits also come in "families" that all share a surname, like Ogou, or Ezili, or Azaka or Ghede. For instance, "Ezili" is a family, Ezili Dantor and Ezili Freda are two individual spirits in that family. The Ogou family are soldiers, the Ezili govern the feminine spheres of life, the Azaka govern agriculture, the Ghede govern the sphere of death and fertility. In Dominican Vodou, there is also an Agua Dulce or "Sweet Waters" family, which encompasses all Indian spirits. There are literally hundreds of lwa. Well known individual lwa include Danbala Wedo, Papa Legba Atibon, and Agwe Tawoyo.

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The cultural values that Vodou embraces center around ideas of honor and respect - to God, to the spirits, to the family and sosyete, and to oneself. There is a plural idea of proper and improper, in the sense that what is appropriate to someone with Danbala Wedo as their head may be different from someone with Ogou Feray as their head, for example.. one spirit is very cool and the other one is very hot. Coolness overall is valued, and so is the ability and inclination to protect oneself and one's own if necessary. Love and support within the family of the Vodou sosyete seems to be the most important consideration. Generosity in giving to the community and to the poor is also an important value. One's blessings come through the community and there is the idea that one should be willing to give back to it in turn. Since Vodou has such a community orientation, there are no "solitaries" in Vodou, only people separated geographically from their elders and house. In contrast to European-based Neopagan tradition, it is not a "do it yourself" religion - a person without a relationship of some kind with elders will not be practicing Vodou as it is understood in Haiti and among Haitians.

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There is a diversity of practice in Vodou across the country of Haiti and the Haitian diaspora. For instance in the north of Haiti the sevis tet ("head washing") or kanzwe may be the only initiation, as it is in the Dominican Republic and Cuba, whereas in Port Au Prince and the south they practice the kanzo rites with three grades of initiation -- kanzo senp, si pwen, and asogwe -- and the latter is the most familiar mode of practice outside of Haiti. Some lineages combine both, as Manbo Katherine Dunham reports from her personal experience in her book "Island Possessed."

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A common saying is that Haiti is 80% Roman Catholic and 100% Vodou. In the southern United States, it has also influenced the system of folk magic and folk religion known as hoodoo which derives primarily from Congo and Angolan magical practices from Central Africa. The best survivals of possibly Haitian-influenced religion in the southern US, however, are most likely to be found within the African-American Spiritual Churches of New Orleans, a Christian sect founded by Mother Leafy Anderson in the early 20th century which incorporates Catholic iconography, ecstatic worship derived from Pentacostal forms, and spiritualism. A hallmark of the New Orleans Spiritual Churches is the honoring of the Native American spirit named Black Hawk.

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Public relations-wise, Vodou has come to be associated in the popular mind with such phenomena as "zombies" and "voodoo dolls". While there is ethnobotanical evidence relating to "zombie" creation, it is a minor phenomenon within rural Haitian culture and not a part of the Vodou religion as such. Such things fall under the auspices of the "bokor" or sorcerer rather than the priest of the Lwa Gine.

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West African or Beninese Vodun is similar to Haitian Vodou in its emphasis on the ancestors, however each family of spirits has its own specialized clergy that is often hereditary. Spirits include Mami Wata, who are goddesses of waters; Legba, who is virile and young in contrast to the old man form he takes in Haiti; Gu, ruling iron and smithcraft; Sakpata, who rules diseases; and many other spirits distinct in their own way to West Africa.

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[For the military aircraft, see F-101 Voodoo](#)

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In the news

Woman Who Smuggled Skull In Luggage Bonds Out

Click10.com, FL -

... human head, from a male in Haiti for ... use as a part of her voodoo beliefs.". The Broward County medical examiner's office believes ...

Voodoo Head Can't Ward Off US Customs

New York Times, United States -

... Ms. Severe told the authorities she had obtained the head in Haiti for "use as a part of her voodoo beliefs," Special Agent Erick Hernandez wrote in an ...

Bill targets voodoo, bird flu

Atlanta Journal Constitution (subscription), USA -

... The bill's sponsor, Rep. Tom McCall (R-Elberton), said he also wants to keep live chickens for being sold for use in voodoo rituals. ...

Voodoo head found in air luggage

Webindia123, India -

... Severe stated that she had obtained the package, which contained a human head, from a male in Haiti for use as part of her voodoo beliefs, the US Attorney's ...

Voodoo priests at risk as bird flu hits Africa

Reuters AlertNet, UK -

COTONOU, Benin, Feb 14 (Reuters) - Priests who tear out the throats of live chickens in ritual sacrifices to Voodoo gods may risk contracting bird flu after ...

The term Voodoo (Vodun in Benin; also Vodou or other phonetically equivalent spellings in Haiti; Vudu in the Dominican Republic) is applied to the branches of a West African ancestor-based religious tradition with primary roots among the Fon-Ewe peoples of West Africa, in the country now known as Benin, formerly the Kingdom of Dahomey, where Vodun is today the national religion of more than 7 million people. In addition to the Fon or Dahomeyan tradition which has remained in Africa, there are related traditions that put down roots in the New World during the days of the transatlantic African slave trade.

Besides Benin, African Vodun and its descendent practices may be found in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Brazil, Ghana, Haiti and Togo. The word vodun is the Fon-Ewe word for spirit.

The more or less "pure" Fon tradition in Cuba is known as La Regla Arara.

In Brazil, the Fon tradition among former slaves has given rise to the tradition known as Jeje Vodun.

New World Traditions

Haitian Vodou

Called Sevis Gine or "African Service" in Haiti, a Creolized form of Vodou is the primary culture and religion of the more than 8 million people of Haiti and the Haitian diaspora.

Haitian Vodou also has strong elements from the Ibo and Kongo peoples of Central Africa and the Yoruba of Nigeria, though many different peoples or "nations" of Africa

have representation in the liturgy of the Sevis Gine, as do the Taíno Indians, the original peoples of the island now known as Hispaniola

Haitian Creole forms of Vodou exist in Haiti (where it is native), the Dominican Republic, parts of Cuba, the United States, and other places that Haitian immigrants dispersed to over the years. It is similar to other African-diasporic religions such as Lukumi or Regla de Ocha (also known as Santería) in Cuba, Candomble and Umbanda in Brazil, all religions that evolved among descendants of transplanted Africans in the Americas.

History

The majority of the Africans who were brought as slaves to Haiti were from the Guinea Coast of West Africa, and their descendants are the primary practitioners of Vodou (those Africans brought to the southern US were primarily from the Kongo kingdom). The survival of the belief system in the New World is remarkable, although the traditions have changed with time. One of the largest differences however between African and Haitian Vodou is that the transplanted Africans of Haiti were obliged to disguise their lwa or spirits as Roman Catholic saints, a process called syncretism.

Most experts speculate that this was done in an attempt to hide their "pagan" religion from their masters who had forbidden them to practice it. To say that Haitian Vodou is simply a mix of West African religions with a veneer of Roman Catholicism would not be entirely correct. This would be ignoring numerous influences from the native Taíno Indians, as well as the evolutionary process that Vodou has undergone shaped by the volatile ferment of Haitian history. It would also be ignoring the large influence of European paganism in Roman Catholicism and its pantheon of saints itself.

Vodou as we know it in Haiti and the Haitian diaspora today is the result of the pressures of many different cultures and ethnicities of people being uprooted from Africa and imported to Hispanola during the African slave trade. Under slavery, African culture and religion was suppressed, lineages were fragmented, and people pooled their religious knowledge and out of this fragmentation became culturally unified. In addition to combining the spirits of many different African and Indian nations, pieces of Roman Catholic liturgy have been incorporated to replace lost prayers or elements; in addition images of Catholic saints are used to represent various spirits or "misteh" ("mysteries", actually the preferred term in Haiti), and many saints themselves are honored in Vodou in their own right. This syncretism allows Vodou to encompass the African, the Indian, and the European ancestors in a whole and complete way. It is truly a "Kreyol" religion.

The most historically important Vodou ceremony in Haitian history was the Bwa Kayiman or Bois Caiman ceremony of August 1791 that began the Haitian Revolution, in which the spirit Ezili Dantor possessed a priestess and received a black pig as an offering, and all those present pledged themselves to the fight for freedom. This ceremony ultimately resulted in the liberation of the Haitian people from their French masters in 1804, and the establishment of the first black people's republic in the history

of the world.

This Haitian Vodou came to the United States to a significant degree beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the waves of Haitian immigrants under the oppressive Duvalier regime, taking root in Miami, New York City, Chicago, and other cities mainly on the two coasts.

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Haitian Vodouisants believe, in accordance with widespread African tradition, that there is one God who is the creator of all, referred to as "Bondje" (from the French "Bon Dieu" or "Good God", distinguished from the god of the whites in a dramatic speech by the houngan Boukman at Bwa Kayiman, but is often considered the same God the Roman Catholic Church talks about). Bondje is distant from his/her/its creation though, and so it is the spirits or the "mysteries", "saints", or "angels" that the Vodouisant turns to for help, as well as to the ancestors. The Vodouisant worships God, and serves the spirits, who are treated with honor and respect as elder members of a household might be. There are said to be twenty-one nations or "nanchons" of spirits, also sometimes called "lwa-yo". Some of the more important nations of lwa are the Rada, the Nago, and the Kongo. The spirits also come in "families" that all share a surname, like Ogou, or Ezili, or Azaka or Ghede. For instance, "Ezili" is a family, Ezili Dantor and Ezili Freda are two individual spirits in that family. The Ogou family are soldiers, the Ezili govern the feminine spheres of life, the Azaka govern agriculture, the Ghede govern the sphere of death and fertility. In Dominican Vodou, there is also an Agua Dulce or "Sweet Waters" family, which encompasses all Indian spirits. There are literally hundreds of lwa. Well known individual lwa include Danbala Wedo, Papa Legba Atibon, and Agwe Tawoyo.

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After a day or two of preparation setting up altars, ritually preparing and cooking fowl and other foods, etc., a Haitian Vodou service begins with a series of Catholic prayers and songs in French, then a litany in Kreyol and African "langaj" that goes through all the European and African saints and lwa honored by the house, and then a series of verses for all the main spirits of the house. This is called the "Priye Gine" or the African Prayer. After more introductory songs, beginning with saluting the spirit of the drums named Hounto, the songs for all the individual spirits are sung, starting with the Legba family through all the Rada spirits, then there is a break and the Petwo part of the service begins, which ends with the songs for the Ghede family. As the songs are sung spirits will come to visit those present by taking possession of individuals and speaking and acting through them. Each spirit is saluted and greeted by the initiates present and will give readings, advice and cures to those who approach them for help. Many hours later in the wee hours of the morning, the last song is sung, guests leave, and all the exhausted hounsies and houngans and manbos can go to sleep.

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The cultural values that Vodou embraces center around ideas of honor and respect - to God, to the spirits, to the family and sosyete, and to oneself. There is a plural idea of proper and improper, in the sense that what is appropriate to someone with Danbala Wedo as their head may be different from someone with Ogou Feray as their head, for example.. one spirit is very cool and the other one is very hot. Coolness overall is valued, and so is the ability and inclination to protect oneself and one's own if necessary. Love and support within the family of the Vodou sosyete seems to be the most important consideration. Generosity in giving to the community and to the poor is also an important value. One's blessings come through the community and there is the idea that one should be willing to give back to it in turn. Since Vodou has such a community orientation, there are no "solitaries" in Vodou, only people separated geographically from their elders and house. In contrast to European-based Neopagan tradition, it is not a "do it yourself" religion - a person without a relationship of some kind with elders will not be practicing Vodou as it is understood in Haiti and among Haitians.

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In the news

Suburban Shaman, by Cecil Helman

Independent, UK -

... Helman practised medicine as a GP for 27 years before taking down his plate and moving on to be a medical anthropologist - a shaman of a different kind. ...

Ailing artist won't be denied tribute

Ottawa Sun, Canada -

Curated by assistant director of contemporary art Greg Hill, Norval Morrisseau --

Shaman Artist is the first solo exhibition by a First Nations artist the ...

Shaman spin on light v dark

New Zealand Herald, New Zealand -

By Roger Clarke. Something is stirring in Russia. A vampire movie, called Night Watch, based on a novel by a child psychiatrist, and ...

Techno Shaman

New City Chicago, IL -

... We discussed his projects in advance of this show. What kind of sound are you working with now? I have always been a techno shaman. ...

See the Amazon as only IMAX can reveal

News & Observer, NC -

Tribal shaman Julio Mamani sets out from his tiny village high in the Andes in search of

medicinal plants in the rain forest that could aid his people. ...

Specifically, Shaman is a term in Evenk, Manchu and other Manchu-Tungus languages for a religious figure; who performs several functions, one of which is analogous to the function of a healer in other cultures. The role of the shaman is also to provide medical care, and to provide for other community needs during crisis times, via supernatural means (means that people from a European cultural tradition might regard as magic, a concept which has its roots in the shamanism of the Middle-east, see magi). The role of the shaman is to communicate with entities on the "spiritual plane", and to secure their aid to provide for the needs of their communities. Although the word ends with "-man," it is a gender neutral term: a man or woman may be a shaman, depending upon cultural tradition. The plural is shamans.

Shamanism

This article is part of the branches of CAM series.

CAM Classifications

NCCAM: Mind-Body Intervention

Modality: Professionalized

Knowledge: Supernatural

Culture: Global

Generically, Shaman refers to analogous functions in other cultures, a function that is sometimes called "medicine man" in English. Shamans have existed in most parts of the world, and the ancient shamans of Europe are more or less distantly remembered as druids, ba'ale shem and völvas, and in fairy tales as wizards and witches. Fairy tales and even the language of everyday life include frequent references to knowledge obtained because "a little bird told me," which is a remnant of the idea that shamans can communicate directly with animals. In the western world many of the roles of shamans have been replaced by (or evolved into those of) priests, scholars and doctors.

Joseph Campbell described the essential difference between priest and shaman:

"The priest is the socially initiated, ceremonially inducted member of a recognized religious organization, where he holds a certain rank and functions as the tenant of an office that was held by others before him, while the shaman is one who, as a consequence of a personal psychological crisis, has gained a certain power of his own." (1969, p. 231)

The "Master of the Animals" represented in Neolithic cave paintings has Bronze Age counterparts in the natures of Orion in the Aegean and Enkidu in the Sumerian/Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh.

Some shamans encourage the belief that they possess supernatural qualities that transcend human nature. To wit, shamans are usually credited with the ability to speak to spiritss and perform feats of magic such as astral projection and healing. Shamans are usually found in tribal cultures with nature religions and beliefs in ancestor spirits, though some persons in modern Western Cultures also consider themselves to be shamans. The shaman's office is frequently held to be hereditary and his ancestral spirits may act as his chief conduits for spiritual aid. However, the most powerful

shamans are those who have a natural aptitude for the calling. These individuals easily enter into the separate reality of the spirits, and do so without the need of drugs or other artificial support. Tradition also holds that a shaman is chosen by the spirits, not by the people. A shaman may be initiated via a serious illness, by being struck by lightning, or by a near-death experience.

One of a shaman's main functions is to protect individuals from hostile supernatural influences. He or she deals with a range of spirits, performs sacrifices and procures oracles. The shaman may act as psychopomp, conducting the spirits of individuals who have just died to the proper refuge for dead spirits. Shamanistic traditions often include induction of trance through natural drugs (often neurotoxins known to be hallucinogens), chanting, fasting, dancing and music. The drum (tungur in Altaic) is an important instrument in shamanic ceremonies, as it is commonly used to induce autohypnotic phenomena. Researchers also suspect that in some cultures schizophrenia or similar conditions may predispose an individual to the role of shaman. That view is a negative interpretation of the same insight that is enunciated by many shamanic cultures -- that the best shamans spontaneously perform their functions.

See also

shamanism

complementary and alternative medicine

References

Mircea Eliade, Shamanism. The classic study of this phenomenon

Joseph Campbell, Primitive Mythology: the masks of God, 1969.

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/coven>

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Coven

In the news

Bassist RANDY COVEN To Guest On Guitarist MILAN POLAK's CD - Nov. ...

Blabbermouth.net, NY -

Bassist Randy Coven (ARK, YNGWIE MALMSTEEN) has just completed seven bass tracks on up-and-coming guitarist Milan Polak's new CD along with Johnny Mac on

drums ...

Iraqis will learn the end justifies the mean times

New York Daily News, NY -

... itself. Many obviously feel that they were lied to by a coven of men quite willing to bushwhack the truth at every opportunity. ...

Crisis in the coven

Vanguard, Nigeria -

... The current scene is of a party that went into an orgy, and we are only seeing, in the crisis within the PDP, the unraveling of this coven of dangerous men and ...

The Devil's New Dictionary - Part 3

OpEdNews -

... s foes while paperchase juggernauts plow through the dead bodies of the living; 3. the mathematics of: 1 den of raciophobic people + 1 coven of raciophobic ...

Senator McCain: 'Mistakes Are Made' In Every War

WAVE, KY -

... States?" Zambroski asked. "There's still a lot of time, we know that," said Steven Coven, another audience member. McCain is leading ...

Coven or covan was originally a late medieval Scots word (c1500) meaning a gathering of any kind according to the Oxford English Dictionary. It derives from the Latin root word convoco meaning to come together or to gather, which also gave rise to the English word convene. The first recorded use of it being applied to witches comes from a much later date from 1662 in the witchtrial of Isabel Gowdie which describes a coven of 13 members. Margaret Murray went used this evidence to claim that all witches across Europe met in groups of thirteen which they called covens. She went on to manipulate the figures in other trials to come to a similar total, though even then she could only come up with eighteen total out of the hundreds of recorded trials. She also provided no evidence the word itself was used outside Scotland at the time of the witchhunts, nor why her ancient prehistoric religion were using a word which of recent date derived from Latin. After Murray popularised the word in the 1920s Gerald Gardner adopted it in his works on Wicca hence its modern use in that religion.

The Coven in Modern Wicca

A coven is, in brief, a gathering or association of witches. The number of persons involved may vary, although while thirteen has been suggested any number above three can be a coven. Two would usually be referred to as a working couple (in any combination of sexes.) It is commonly said that a coven larger than thirteen is unweildy as group dynamics make it difficult. The term has been used with both positive and negative connotations, largely dependent on the speaker's view of witches and witchcraft.

In Wicca and similar religions, the term coven implies a gathering similar to that implied by congregation in Christian parlance. It is composed of a group of believers gathered together for a ceremony of worship such as Drawing down the Moon.

An intermediate view is often portrayed in fantasy stories and popular culture. In this

usage, a coven is a gathering of witches to work spells in tandem. Movie portrayals have included, e.g. The Craft and COVEN (pronounced ko ven) (documented in the movie American Movie)

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Gardnerian Wicca

Gardnerian Wicca is a path of Wicca named after Gerald Gardner (1884-1964), a British civil servant who studied magic among other things. He knew and worked with many famous occultists, not the least of which was Aleister Crowley (1875-1947). Certain traditional practices had survived in Gardner's family, and he found others who had preserved similar survivals, and shared his beliefs in the ancientry of this knowledge. Gardner set about re-inventing that ancient, ancestral religion. He had little to work with and had to write a good deal of it himself. He borrowed appropriate work from other artists, most notably Aleister Crowley and Rudyard Kipling, Queen Victoria's Poet Laureate. Gardner's High Priestess, Doreen Valiente (1922-2000) wrote much of the most well-known poetry, including the much-quoted Charge of the Goddess. The core group grew slowly and in utter secrecy as Witchcraft was illegal in Britain at the time. When the Witchcraft Laws were replaced, in 1951, by the Fraudulent Mediums Act, Gerald Gardner went public.

Some neopagans regard Gardnerian Wicca as a "fundamentalist" path, in that it demands fairly strict adherence to the procedures and principles laid down by Gardner, as well as stringent requirements for initiation. See Also Wicca, Neopaganism.

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Starhawk

In the news

FINDING MY RELIGION Neo-pagan witch on celebrating the dead and ...

San Francisco Chronicle, United States -

... books, including "The Pagan Book of Living and Dying" (Harper San Francisco, 1997), which she co-authored with well-known Pagan activist Starhawk, and "Pagan ... Witches Work Their Magic in Hurricane Zone

13abc.com, OH -

... Starhawk — who is self-proclaimed leader in modern Earth-based spirituality, author and global justice activist — was outside of President Bush's Texas ...

CD Review: Constantines

Evansville Courier & Press (subscription), IN -

... say more with its few bursts of guitars than most bands say in an entire song, underscoring the lyrical tribute to eco-activist/Wiccan-spiritualist Starhawk. ...

Bewitched by Wicca

Washington Times, DC -

... Self-described witch Starhawk, author of "The Earth Path," said that this Halloween she and other Wiccans will meet to perform a circular dance that signifies ...

Listen, Ring, Scream - 100,000 Bells Toll

Bay Area Indymedia, CA -

... <http://www.starhawk.org> (Starhawk is the author of ten books on earth-based spirituality and activism, including *The Earth Path*, *The Spiral Dance*, and together ... Starhawk (born Miriam Samos in 1951) is a writer, activist and Witch. She is well known as a theorist of paganism; her writings are considered required reading. She is a trainer in nonviolence and direct action, and activist within the peace movement, women's movement, environmental movement, and Anti-globalization movement.

She is the author of numerous non-fiction best-selling works: *The Spiral Dance* (1979, 1989, 1999), *Dreaming the Dark* (1982, 1988, 1997), *Truth or Dare* (1988), *Webs of Power: Notes from the Global Uprising* (2003) as well as her webwritings

<http://www.starhawk.org/activism/activism-writings/activism-writings.html> . With Hilary Valentine she wrote *The Twelve Wild Swans: A Journey Into Magic, Healing and Action* (2000) a resource book for Pagans. With M. Macha NightMare and Reclaiming Collective, she wrote *The Pagan Book of Living and Dying* (1997). *Circle Round: Raising Children in the Goddess Tradition* (1998) was co-written with Anne Hill and Diane Baker. Starhawk's fiction includes *The Fifth Sacred Thing* (1993), and *Walking to Mercury* (1997).

Films, Music, etc.: Starhawk has been consulted or contributed to the films *Signs Out of Time: The Story of Archaeologist Marija Gimbutas*, *Goddess Remembered*, *The Burning Times*, and *Full Circle*. She participated in the Reclaiming CDs *Chants: Ritual Music*, and recorded the guided meditation *Way to the Well*.

A feminist and peace activist, she is one of the foremost voices of ecofeminism and travels widely in North America and Europe giving lectures and workshops. She lives in San Francisco, where she works with the Reclaiming tradition she helped found; this now international organization offers classes, workshops, camps, and public rituals in earth-based spirituality, with the goal to "unify spirit and politics".

External links

Starhawk

Reclaiming

Serpentine Music

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<http://compostcoven.org/welcome.html>

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About this capture

come on in and look around:

Like its namesake the compost pile, Compost Coven has been turned over many times, scattered to fertilize new growth elsewhere, and reassembled using all KINDS of oddly-assorted elements.

Disk of Shadows:

two complete training courses in the Craft, plus lots of other archival material of interest to Witches.

the Official Seal of Compost Coven

Compost NewsLetter

a Pagan zine which evolved into a zine of the bizarre and horrific but never lost its disrespectful attitude. Featuring:

- Diane Fenster's garden notes
- Ron Miller's Magickal recipes
- Leah Samul's Ancient Geek mythology
- Jo Steen's Hex Spells
- Valerie Walker's essays and snide remarks.
- The fiction section of the CNL Archives contains adult material and is housed on another site.

Witch Links

an alphabetical listing of Wiccan sites on the Internet. Eventually, we will review and rate each one, but if you are familiar with any of them, please let us know your opinion. and if you have any suggested additions, please email us.

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This site created and maintained by Valerie Walker

Page updated 01/01/2026

<http://www.lilithslantern.com/>

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& Feri Initiation
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Send them to: info@lilithslantern.com

Lilith's Lantern

Lilith's Lantern is an old Witch-name for the Moon. In these pages we hope to shed light on Vicia and some lesser known aspects of the Anderson Feri Tradition of Witchcraft.

This site has been created by Mandorla, a group practicing the Craft as taught by Victor and Cora Anderson to their direct initiates during the 1980s and 90s. Several members of Mandorla are initiates of the Andersons and were their long-term students.

Use the links at left to explore. Inactive links are areas that are currently under construction.

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AOL users should have graphics optimized to properly view this site.
Click [HERE](#) for more info.

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Welcome to Reclaiming: a Community of People, a Tradition of Witchcraft, and a 501(c)3 non-profit Religious Organization in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Reclaiming is a community of women and men working to unify spirit and politics. Our vision is rooted in the religion and magic of the Goddess, the Immanent Life Force. We see our work as teaching and making magic; the art of empowering ourselves and each other. In our classes, workshops, and public rituals, we train our voices, bodies, energy, intuition, and minds. We use the skills we learn to deepen our strength, both as individuals and as community, to voice our concerns about the world in which we live, and bring to birth a vision of a new culture.

[Directory: About Reclaiming :: Find Us Worldwide :: Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine :: Bay Area Classes & Events :: Bay Area Public Rituals :: Resources, Personal & Political](#)

:: How to Reach Us

Breaking News

2006 Witchcamps | 2006 San Francisco rituals | Advance-order the new Reclaiming CD, Witches Brew!

New at ReclaimingQuarterly.org

RQ theme - Tarot | Pagan Cluster in New Orleans (updated) | Listen to Reclaiming chants online!

About Reclaiming:

Everything you wanted to know about Reclaiming, including our structure, history, and more. Articles on witchcraft, ritual etiquette, and other writings by Reclaiming community members are here, too. Go to "About Reclaiming".

Find Us Worldwide:

Looking for Reclaiming in your area, outside of San Francisco? These pages will help you find a local group or Witch Camp, subscribe to community or special interest e-mail lists, and obtain information regarding teachers willing to help you establish your own community. Go to "Find Us Worldwide".

Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine:

Our locally produced, all-volunteer maintained, quarterly published magazine. Reclaiming Quarterly's focus is both Bay Area specific and world-wide, with contributing writers such as Starhawk, T. Thorn Coyle, and more. You can subscribe on-line! Go to "Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine".

Bay Area Classes & Events:

The San Francisco Bay Area hosts many classes, workshops and other offerings by Reclaiming community members, including Witch Camp. Not from the Bay Area? See "Find Us Worldwide" for happenings around the United States and the rest of the world, plus links to communities near you. Go to "Classes & Events".

Bay Area Public Rituals:

Open to the public, the San Francisco Bay Area hosts a wealth of celebrations throughout the Wheel of the Year. Go to "Bay Area Public Rituals".

Resources - Personal & Political:

Within these pages, you can find pagan Death & Dying resources, the El Salvador Friendship Fund, recommended books & tapes, and more. Go to "Resources - Personal & Political".

How to Reach Us:

Information on how to contact us and other specific Bay Area Reclaiming personalities, plus how to submit information to the Quarterly & Webspinners regarding events. Go to "How to Reach Us".

Directory: About Reclaiming :: Find Us Worldwide :: Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine ::
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The Feri Tradition of Witchcraft

F(a)eri(e) is a mystical path of spiritual development unlike any other. An initiatory mystery tradition of modern Witchcraft passed down by Victor & Cora Anderson and those who have been initiated in a lineage tracing back to them, it was first popularized by Starhawk in her book *The Spiral Dance*, as well as through the works of Gwydion Pendderwen. Hallmarks of the Feri tradition include shamanic practices, as well as specific symbolic, meditational and inner exercises. A highly personal path, it has old and strange roots that include influences or similarities such as Huna, Afro-centered spirituality, Celtic symbolism, sexual mysticism, esoteric Christianity, Middle-Eastern mysticism, ecstatic practice, and others. While much of our tradition is secret, some aspects are presented here for the betterment of our community, and the world at large.

—Storm Faerywolf

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The Feri Tradition of Witchcraft

Classes
From time to time, some Feri initiates
offer their services as teachers of the tradition.

Being listed here is in no way an endorsement of their practices.
Use your own better judgment when choosing a teacher.

UPCOMING EVENT: Sex and Creation: An Anderson Feri Intensive
May 4-7, 2006, Diana's Grove, Missouri
[Click HERE](#) for more info.

Feri Tradition

The teachers listed here practice and teach forms of the Feri tradition as passed down from the teachings of Victor and Cora Anderson. While there may be differences in their approach and practice, they are listed together to reflect their common initiatory lineage.

Anaar - South Bay Area, CA

BlackHeart Feri - New England Area, and Long Distance

Dominic Elemirion - San Diego, CA

Hilary Geller - Berkeley, CA (510) 843-1117

Sage Goode - Vancouver, Canada

Steve Hewell - Atlanta, GA

Storm Faerywolf - Bay Area (Antioch, CA) and Long Distance

Thorn Coyle - Teaches internationally

Valerie Walker - San Francisco, CA

Branches of the Feri tradition

There is much diversity within the larger body of the Feri tradition. Even more if you take into consideration the many branches or paths that have been inspired from Feri power and practice.

What follows are some variants of Feri that utilize many of the tools and practices of the Mother tradition, while offering a unique initiatory lineage. Teachers listed here have indicated that they also offer an initiatory lineage in the Mother tradition as well as that of the particular branch they represent. Contact individual teachers for more information about their practice and lineage.

The Third Road

The Third Road™ was begun by Feri initiate Francesca DeGrandis in an effort to provide the tools of Feri in a way that is safe for the student. Much emphasis is placed on personal healing and Goddess spirituality. Contact individual teachers for more info.

Carrie Vadnais-Barraco - Auburn, NY.

Laura Gail - Greenfield, MA

Reclaiming

The Reclaiming tradition was begun in the 1970's by several people (most notably Starhawk) as a means to direct the power and tools of the Feri tradition into a space of feminist awareness and political action. Non-hierarchical. Initiations are not required to fully participate in the tradition, although in some lines of Reclaiming full Feri initiations are offered to those who are interested.

Deborah Oak - SF, CA

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"The Faery Tradition", by Anna Korn

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Ethereal Feri Thoughts

[Most Recent Entries] [Calendar View] [Friends]

Below are the 7 most recent journal entries recorded in Feri's LiveJournal:

Friday, August 8th, 2003

3:24 pm

[elfwreck]

Friends only?

I'm considering making this journal viewable by friends (i.e. members) only. Any thoughts on this? I'm wondering if the total lack of privacy is part of why this is slow.

Ideas about whether membership should be invite-only is another issue. (Also maybe worth discussing. But so far, I think that'd just keep it tiny.)

(16 Comments | [Comment on this](#))

Thursday, July 17th, 2003

4:37 pm

[catbirdgirl]

knock is this thing on?

I'm hoping to be studying feri soon.

For those of you that ARE feri initiates or students or even seekers like me... what drew you to feri?

And for students/initiates- what sorts of things have studying feri changed in your life?

Thanks, in advance.

Current Mood: curious
(9 Comments |Comment on this)
Friday, June 27th, 2003
11:41 pm
[royalbananafish]

Passion Update
I am have found three passions:

1. coaching
2. teaching
3. dancing

I had an interesting realization yesterday. I have a nerve injury to my right hand/arm, which causes me to not be able to feel my fingers. Related, I have lost a huge amount of strength not just in my arm, but specifically in my right hand (grip strength). My power is...losing power :)
(1 Comment |Comment on this)
Sunday, May 11th, 2003
5:53 pm
[elfwreck]

Left-Hand Path
I've been thinking about Gabriel's description of left-hand path, and why Feri is one. (I got permission from him to share it, and I've mentioned it to a few lists when the subject of "what does LHP mean" comes up.)

Well the problem is that like Karma these ideas have been adopted and distorted by westerners who have no real understanding of them.

The left hand path is also called in India the hero's path, as opposed to the path of the herd, the right hand path.

The right hand path is renunciatory and acetic.

The left hand path proclaims "we shall free free ourselves by means of those things that bind us."

The core rituals of Left hand path tantra, whether shaivite or centered on Kali/Durga

include the feast of the five forbidden things: alcohol, drugs, sex, meat, and fish--all things anathema to the right hand path.

(more details here)

Do you think of Feri as a left-hand path? Do you think the LaVeyans are misunderstanding the term, or just dealing an entirely different kind of LHP? (Maybe a path that doesn't go anywhere. I meet a lot of LaVeyans who seem to be wandering around in circles.)

Current Mood: thoughtful

(5 Comments |Comment on this)

5:53 pm

[elfwreck]

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The right hand path is renunciatory and acetic.

The left hand path proclaims "we shall free free ourselves by means of those things that bind us."

The core rituals of Left hand path tantra, whether shaivite or centered on Kali/Durga include the feast of the five forbidden things: alcohol, drugs, sex, meat, and fish--all things anathema to the right hand path.

(more details here)

Do you think of Feri as a left-hand path? Do you think the LaVeyans are misunderstanding the term, or just dealing an entirely different kind of LHP? (Maybe a path that doesn't go anywhere. I meet a lot of LaVeyans who seem to be wandering around in circles.)

Current Mood: thoughtful

(1 Comment |Comment on this)

Thursday, May 8th, 2003

1:19 pm

[elfwreck]

Feri Senators?

Self initiation into our tradition has been tried, and is not possible.

As a matter of fact, it's laughable. Rather like electing yourself to the Senate.

Hm.

But someone who's not in the Senate is certainly capable of knowing what a Senator does, and what stresses a Senator is under. A non-Senator is within her rights to tell Senators what they should do as Senators. And someone can be perfectly qualified to be a Senator--can even have the public acclaim necessary, and not be a Senator because (for example) they're a Governor instead.

And the Senate doesn't let her vote with them, but they allow her access to their deliberations, and are required to listen to her opinions about their actions in some circumstances. Some Senators are obviously incompetent, and everyone--other Senators, the general public, movie stars in France--is welcome to say so. "Being elected to the Senate" bestows no wisdom, no abilities, no current of power to one's life; all it does is give a person the right to vote on some issues.

I think this is a lousy metaphor.

On the other hand, some Senators spent twenty years trying to get there; others were elected on their first campaign. Some are skilled, some are not. Their **only** distinguishing common trait is "elected to the Senate."

Maybe not as bad as I first thought.

Current Mood: contemplative

Current Music: Dire Straits - Brothers In Arms

(1 Comment | [Comment on this](#))

Tuesday, May 6th, 2003

1:23 am

[royalbananafish]

Passion, Passion, Passion Point

(I've posted about this in my own LJ, and on assorted e-lists, so if this is a rerun for you, well, too bad?)

In a fit of self-knowledge, I discovered that my weak point on the Iron Pentacle is the passion point. To call it a "weak point" is sort of like describing the Atlantic as "some water," actually. It was quite a shock to me to realize it, as it had been staring me in the face for quite some time...I just hadn't seen it. For weeks, the passion point was a big, black, block.

Since that realization, and through all the pondering I've done, I've only come up with one bit of my passion point: dance. I realized this through the Dances of Universal Peace, even though it should have been a major no-brainer--at one point in my life I danced six days a week. (My mind had probably blocked it out a bit because I'm

currently in extended healing from two car accidents, and it's just now that I'm able to get back into dancing.) I'm now looking into more ways to integrate dance/movement into my practice and my life.

Still working with passion, I'm curious as to what anyone has to offer on the subject. More specifically, I'd love to see:

1. exercises/work you do to work with the passion point
2. how you discovered/intuited your passions
3. how you worked through ANY point on the Iron Pentacle you found "stuck"
4. any resources regarding ecstatic dance practices (other than DUP and G. Roth's work, as I'm up on both of those, and Thorn's devotional dance video, which I have)

Thanks.

Current Mood: curious
(4 Comments | Comment on this)
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Activity within 7 days: (No Activity)
Description

a secret email cabal for feri initiates and students, freeformcraft is in the business of fomenting, incitement, and discussage.

new applicants for membership: please submit a short bio to v.weatherwax@gmail.com to have your application considered. your bio should include your name (magickal or mundane), *brief* history of your craft background, lineage if an initiate or teacher/s if a student of feri, and whether you are known to anyone on this list. correct spelling is a plus.

applicants neglecting to provide a bio within one week of application will be denied entrance to the party, and will be forced to languish in outer darkness while we privileged beings within engage in unspeakable (or possibly unpronounceable) rites.

Message History

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Group Email Addresses

Post message: freeformcraft@yahoogroups.com
Subscribe: freeformcraft-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
Unsubscribe: freeformcraft-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
List owner: freeformcraft-owner@yahoogroups.com
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Send them to: info@lilithslantern.com

Lilith's Lantern

Lilith's Lantern is an old Witch-name for the Moon. In these pages we hope to shed light on Vicia and some lesser known aspects of the Anderson Feri Tradition of Witchcraft.

This site has been created by Mandorla, a group practicing the Craft as taught by Victor and Cora Anderson to their direct initiates during the 1980s and 90s. Two of the founding members of Mandorla are long-term students and initiates of the Andersons.

Use the links at left to explore. Inactive links are areas that are currently under construction.

1/27/05 - NEW LETTER FROM CORA added.

12/23/04 - INTERVIEW ADDED- Interview with Victor Anderson by Inni Baruch, under Victor's Writings.

12/21/04 - VICTOR'S NEWLY PUBLISHED BOOK OF POETRY is now available for order through our Anderson Bookstore!

12/13/04 - ARTICLE ADDED - Short article by Victor, under Victor's Writings.

12/10/04 - TWO NEW PAGES! - About Us and Mandorla Writings, a selection of writings about Vicia and the Anderson Feri Tradition by Mandorla members.

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Welcome to Reclaiming: a Community of People, a Tradition of Witchcraft, and a 501(c)3 non-profit Religious Organization in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Reclaiming is a community of women and men working to unify spirit and politics. Our vision is rooted in the religion and magic of the Goddess, the Immanent Life Force. We see our work as teaching and making magic; the art of empowering ourselves and each other. In our classes, workshops, and public rituals, we train our voices, bodies, energy, intuition, and minds. We use the skills we learn to deepen our strength, both as individuals and as community, to voice our concerns about the world in which we live, and bring to birth a vision of a new culture.

Directory: [About Reclaiming](#) :: [Find Us Worldwide](#) :: [Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine](#) ::
[Bay Area Classes & Events](#) :: [Bay Area Public Rituals](#) :: [Resources, Personal & Political](#)
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Breaking News

Witchcamps and Family Camps | Reclaiming CDs - Order Online | How to Lead a Spiral Dance - Animation!

New at ReclaimingQuarterly.org

SoLuna Wheel of the Year Calendar | Creating and Working with Labyrinths | G8 Protests in Scotland (photos + reports)

About Reclaiming:

Everything you wanted to know about Reclaiming, including our structure, history, and more. Articles on witchcraft, ritual etiquette, and other writings by Reclaiming community members are here, too. Go to "About Reclaiming".

Find Us Worldwide:

Looking for Reclaiming in your area, outside of San Francisco? These pages will help you find a local group or Witch Camp, subscribe to community or special interest e-mail lists, and obtain information regarding teachers willing to help you establish your own community. Go to "Find Us Worldwide".

Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine:

Our locally produced, all-volunteer maintained, quarterly published magazine. Reclaiming Quarterly's focus is both Bay Area specific and world-wide, with contributing writers such as Starhawk, T. Thorn Coyle, and more. You can subscribe on-line! Go to "Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine".

Bay Area Classes & Events:

The San Francisco Bay Area hosts many classes, workshops and other offerings by Reclaiming community members, including Witch Camp. Not from the Bay Area? See "Find Us Worldwide" for happenings around the United States and the rest of the world, plus links to communities near you. Go to "Classes & Events".

Bay Area Public Rituals:

Open to the public, the San Francisco Bay Area hosts a wealth of celebrations throughout the Wheel of the Year. Go to "Bay Area Public Rituals".

Resources - Personal & Political:

Within these pages, you can find pagan Death & Dying resources, the El Salvador Friendship Fund, recommended books & tapes, and more. Go to "Resources - Personal & Political".

How to Reach Us:

Information on how to contact us and other specific Bay Area Reclaiming personalities, plus how to submit information to the Quarterly & Webspinners regarding events. Go to "How to Reach Us".

Directory: About Reclaiming :: Find Us Worldwide :: Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine ::
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Learn Wicca / Wiccan Classes / Classes in The Celtic Shamanism of Faerie / Fairy Tradition & Personal Transformation

Francesca De Grandis
and

The 3rd Road®

Classes in Wicca (The Celtic Shamanism of Faerie Tradition) & Personal Transformation

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What is the 3rd Road Community?

Who is Francesca De Grandis?

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Class Schedules

THE 3RD ROAD tradition is a living branch of ancient Faerie shamanism, also called Wicca, Goddess Spirituality, Faerie Tradition, or Celtic shamanism. It develops one's spiritual, psychic, and worldly potential, while honoring each person's inextricable weaving with society, nature and cosmos. This is an ecstatic path pursued via a supervised and disciplined approach to: psychic training; intense personal growth (which includes purification of the inner blocks that keep one from fulfillment and service); an experience of the love of the Goddess and God in daily life; and a practical application of shamanism to life's joys and challenges. The 3rd Road is an initiatory path.

The 3rd Road has two distinct branches: Mystic Rose and Stellar Rose. Each stands on its own as a complete training with its own unique initiation. Some students choose to

gain the benefits of both trainings. Although both trainings are initiatory, initiation is not guaranteed upon completion of the classes. However, certification of completion is given.

Both branches entail traditional shamanic teaching methods, and participants undergo an authentic shamanic journey toward personal fulfillment and magical expertise.

After the advanced training of either branch, some students continue on with post graduate training. Post graduate work is not described on the site, being a moot point until one has undergone the earlier training.

The Mystic Rose Curriculum\Branch\Training, formerly called the "core 3rd Road training," consists of 5 semesters (almost two years) and is done face-to-face.

There are two entry-level classes which are each three months long, can be taken in any order, and are complete trainings unto themselves for those who desire no further work. However, these "sister" curriculums complement each other, add up to a larger whole, and are prerequisites for advanced Mystic Rose training, which consists of three additional semesters.

The Stellar Rose Curriculum\Branch\Training is only available by teleseminar, and takes 2 years to complete.

Entry-level classes can be taken in any order, and each is a complete training unto itself, often with a specific focus and empowerment for those who desire to focus only on the material available in that particular class. Each entry-level class is six or seven weeks long, and there is approximately a year's worth of entry-level classes. After that, students may go on to advanced training, committing to a year long supervised shamanic journey, magical training, and spiritual development.

I so believe in teleseminars as a valid means of transmitting shamanism that the Stellar Rose material is available only by teleseminar, even to my local students.

THE 3RD ROAD Wiccan school and institute of healing in San Francisco, California, is where Ms. De Grandis both teaches and offers psychic readings (shamanic counseling.) While she herself is committed to practicing and teaching witchcraft (the religion of ancient European shamanism), as a counselor Francesca guides clients from a wide diversity of religious walks of life. Honoring the client's own spirituality, she has offered compassionate support to people of all backgrounds, beliefs, and lifestyles, and brings to her counseling the benefits of long experience.

THE 3RD ROAD community is world-wide. The SF institute, like the temple of an ancient city, is the nucleus of a community rich with diversity. Students -- wondrously mad, politically motivated, representing everyone from lawyers to bike messengers, and a rainbow of race, ethnicity and lifestyle -- join together to study, heal, work and play. Students, past and present, also gather to celebrate the eight Wiccan festivals of the

year wheel. Often students' friends and family, and the larger pagan community, join in the celebration.

The 3rd Road teleseminar community is international, and meets in small, personal phone groups.

Someday, 3rd Road's type of small, intimate, yet empowered community will form the basis of the "global village."

THE 3RD ROAD classes, whether Mystic Rose or Stellar Rose courses, emphasize the spiritual and magical practices of the Old Religion, solid magical technique, living the Wiccan religion of love and worship, and the power and poetry of the Faerie Faith. Classes consist of lecture, ritual and discussion. Weekly ritual practices are assigned. Because students learn tools for inner change, the work can be vigorous and deeply moving. Francesca is committed to safe emotional and psychic practices. To these ends registration is usually limited, so that groups are small and personal. Many solitary practitioners who usually avoid groups find the classes a safe and supportive learning environment.

Entry Level curriculum might include but not be limited to: magical techniques; energy perception and manipulation; the poetry of magic and physics; psychic protection; ritual format; manifestation of material goals; urban shamanism; applied theology and myth; strengthening relationship to Deity; alignment of Godself, conscious mind, and unconscious; rituals for personal cleansing and inner transformation; ecstatic techniques; ethics; and sexual healing. Students also enjoy experienced guidance to make spiritual training relevant to their present lives and strengthen the God(dess) within.

Shamanism is essentially taking one's inner and outer problems -- whether they are typical daily frustrations or major trauma -- and using them as springboards into prosperity, greatness, and joy. Classes reveal how to accomplish this. One gains a rich heart openness to deep relationship with Goddess, family, and community.

Most entry-level classes are multilayered, tailored to be suitable for both beginners and adepts.

Many Stellar Rose entry-level courses explore one topic in depth. For example, a course might focus on herbal magic, traditional healing used for gender empowerment, shamanic counseling, pagan ministry, or sacred sexuality.

In the case of the Gentle Heart; Palm Up teleseminar, I call it "naptime for spiritual warriors," because it offers eight principles of surrender that keep you from being a cosmic doormat and give you a fluidity and passion that make you unstoppable. The material is profoundly and experientially life-changing.

Advanced Instruction in either branch, as stated above, takes one additional year. Undertaken only by those dedicated to the Old Gods, these are vigorous and challenging trainings -- big commitments bearing the sweetest, richest, and most mysterious fruit. Curriculum advances topics introduced in entry level courses. For example, students come to an even deeper trust of their inner voice.

In the Mystic Rose branch, advanced work also includes trance journey; sacred space (circle); power quest; power bundle; spiritual healing of self and others; leading services; community building skills; gender healing; and ritual creation. Students also receive private, personalized lessons. Via focused exercise and repetition, students gain facility in the Magical Art much the way dancers or martial artists train to command their art.

In the Stellar Rose branch, advanced work includes gender healing; ritual creation; construction of one's inner power-place; power quest; and community building. Students learn and/or sharpen the magical techniques most relevant to their own work and personalities. The Stellar Rose curriculum is still being created. Once that is done, other aspects of its advanced curriculum will be listed on this page.

As students progress in either branch, individualized curriculum is developed; one student might learn about pastoral counseling, another about animal totems. The personal attention and fellowship that is an important and integral part of Wiccan training is deepened as students work on their special projects in class supported by the group. As with all 3rd Road classes, material is not taught academically but experientially.

A PERSONAL STATEMENT, updated 2003

"In 1986 everyone thought I was crazy to start an institute of Wicca and personal growth -- such an institute was unheard of, and a one person staff (me!) could never pull it off. Well, here I am, still doing it, and happy as a bubble coasting along the surface of a brook.

"Of course, things have expanded from a one person operation. I finally got an assistant. Students and graduates help produce the Pagan holiday rites. But all in all the institute remains as it started, fulfilling my original vision -- a student body small enough that folks can get to know each other; classes & rituals in a safe environment; in-depth, finely tuned study; the teacher accessible for follow up on class curriculum; and the focus on personal and individualized growth. I am pleased!

"A formal, efficient institute can be small, simple and personal. In this uncomplicated intimate structure, I have taught innumerable students.

"In this day and age, my institute is surely unusual, yet it is a true center for teaching and healing, and the focal point for a community. This is in keeping with traditional shamanic culture: instead of a nationally or internationally centralized governing body, shamanic culture happens in small clusters of independent minded, but healthily interdependent, people. In shamanic society, each person is important, their unique needs and potential affirmed and supported.

"A shaman walks between the stars but lives IN the world, realizing that time and competence are precious commodities, which need to be coupled with humane priorities. We must be down to earth, mystics who apply our visions practically, so that we can fulfill ourselves and obligations to family, friends, community, and planet.

"Each person has a unique talent or talents that make them joyous and fully themselves. When we develop these passions, we honor the sacredness of life. Only through serving others with these unique talents can planet and community be healed. My focus is personal growth so each of us can attain this selfhood. Travelers on the 3rd Road are able to use their full potential to serve the larger community.

"Now, teaching 3rd Road teleseminars, I am finding it a way to fulfill my original vision of my classes, with people who live far away. There's all the power, warmth, community, and focus on individuals. Teleseminars are giving me a rich new depth of camaraderie as we, in the teleseminars, move forward side-by-side in a spiritual growth which is strengthening our ability to become happier in our personal lives as well as helping us better make a difference in the world. I no longer feel so alone while fighting the good fight. The 3rd Road teleseminar student body is a precious community that I really need and celebrate.

"The synchronicity with which 3rd Road began and continues to develop is daily. For example, I started the teleseminars because so many wonderful people who wanted to study with me lived far away. First, I taught a master class for those who had already done the program in my book *Be a Goddess!* Then I adapted already existing workshops. A teleseminar student begged me to do a complete 2-year training by phone. I insisted I ethically could not. Then, one day, I had a vision. The light bulb went on. It was as if, when I both created and adapted those workshops, Goddess had played a trick, making them perfect to combine with the *Be a Goddess!* curriculum, the *Be a Goddess Master Class*, and additional specially formulated courses, to add up to the Stellar Rose branch of 3rd Road. I kept checking my notes -- could this be possible?

"It was! Detail for detail kept lining up "coincidentally" to perfectly fulfill my high standard of what is needed! So now I have thrown myself into this clearly Goddess-given flow, and am creating/channeling the rest of the curriculum. It is an enormous blessing -- and responsibility -- to be a channel for this poetry of transformative earth spirituality. I was surprised, quite honestly, to discover that authentic Faerie shamanism can be transmitted through this venue. Now, I see that it makes total sense -- shamanism is shamanism. Its lessons transcend all circumstances, if those involved participate sincerely. I am striving diligently to stay a clear channel for a curriculum that is

comprehensive, effective, and safe. Students -- novices and elders -- tell me it's working, that their lives are blooming like never before. I am so lucky to be on this adventure, on the 3rd Road. Come join me! Forget your reasons not to -- just come and love yourself.

"Blessings on you, take good care of yourself, because every single one of us needs each and every one of the rest of us, so that we can keep on keeping on making a difference.

"I am dedicated to the Goddess and God."

-- Francesca De Grandis

FRANCESCA DE GRANDIS, author of HarperSanFrancisco's Be a Goddess! and Goddess Initiation, is a traditional spiritual healer, and the daughter of a Sicilian witch. Francesca graduated from New College of California where she pursued Shamanic Studies. After completing a rigorous and rare seven year training to become a shaman in the Celtic or Faerie Tradition, she went on to earn the title "Master in the Faerie Faith." She is also an initiated Kahuna, as well as ordained in the Fellowship of Isis. Ms. De Grandis has been a Shamanic counselor since 1982, and has been featured in The New York Times, USA Today, and Cosmopolitan.

Lynn Andrews, author of Medicine Woman: "Francesca De Grandis has given us an inspirational bridge between ancient wisdom and our current life."

Starhawk, author of The Spiral Dance: "A witch who knows her stuff"

Complete Woman: "De Grandis teaches others how to have great sex, spiritual power, and enjoy the world..."

Students & Clients:

"I gained incredible insight and valuable tools for making necessary changes...a testing, tugging feeling of adventure... the realization of birth, of being mother to yourself. Francesca, midwife and godmother in my rebirth...she changes lives like no-one else...I felt welcome and safe...Francesca offers authentic teachings...her program integrates the rigor of non-academic scholarship with a depth of emotional, psychic and physical experience that's rare...a truly comprehensive and complete training that leaves you an experienced witch...kindness and fun...My life has opened like a rose."

More Students:

"I feel incredibly graced to have met and studied with Francesca... taking her classes, and reading her books, I have connected to my deepest and most powerful truths. Francesca has helped me ignite my own natural shamanic fire. Practical results of my study with her extend to every area of my life...I am indebted to Francesca..." --

Morgaina, Los Angeles, California

"...Francesca is such a warm, loving, and giving person... After experiencing the energy in two teleseminars, I know that she has a keen sense of what will work and what won't. She has a true gift of reading the environment and of pulling together a very diverse collection of people into a cohesive, supportive, loving, and productive group... Very quickly, during a teleseminar, you stop thinking of yourself as being in a phone conference and are drawn into the warmth, magic, and joy..." -- Kathi Somers, Southern California

"...I felt the need to reach out to a community of others walking this path. The teleseminar was a perfect solution. I've learned so much ... from the elder wisdom and personal attention that Francesca offers. I am grateful for her guidance and integrity." -- Liz Cherniak, Calgary, Canada

"I'm a private person and don't like to be put on the spot. During a teleseminar, Francesca creates a 'virtual temple' where all styles are encouraged. I can be me, participate silently, and have a great time doing so." -- Night Joy, Boston, Massachusetts

Frequently Asked Questions

Be advised: below are quick n' dirty answers. However, the rest of the page often addresses the same issues in greater detail and depth.

What if I can't afford the tuition?

Which class is best to take first?

What do I take if I'm a complete novice?

Where do I start if I'm an elder?

What's the difference between the face-to-face classes and teleseminars?

Which of the two are more intense or comprehensive?

Which is better for me?

How does a teleseminar work?

Q: What if I can't afford the tuition?

Francesca (FDG): There's scholarship and work trade available. And if the problem is

not money per se, but paying a lump sum all at once, call me. I'm very flexible about working out a payment plan. Or if you've a specific skill or product you want to offer, call me about a trade.

Q: Which class is best to take first?

FDG: Entry-level classes can be taken in any order.

Q: What do I take if I'm a complete novice?

FDG: Entry-level classes are totally accessible to beginners. Honest!

Q: Where do I start if I'm an elder?

FDG: You sit on your hands and start at the beginning. Spiritual seekers on any path have to do that, anyway - occasionally start from the ground up. And 3rd Road 101 is not generic Wicca 101, so you need entry-level classes upon which to build advanced 3rd Road work. Elders from many traditions have found 3rd Road an excellent supplement to their own paths.

Q: What's the difference between the face-to-face classes and teleseminars?

FDG: I refuse to say. There don't seem to be words that are truthful. Both branches are unique, but anything I say to differentiate seems to somehow belittle one or the other of the two. All I can say is, they're both worth taking.

Q: Which of the two are more intense or comprehensive?

FDG: As I try to find ways to differentiate between the two branches, it only becomes more confusing, not less. For example, many people take one branch, and feel it's totally changed their life. Many others, who want all the tools, power, knowledge, and growth they can get, integrate the two branches. I do know that both achieve many of the same goals, and both lay down a solid spiritual and magical foundation, then go on to build on that foundation. However, the tools and means through which this is done are quite different in the two branches. I feel like a trickster as I write out this FAQ Sheet. Maybe that says something.

Q: Which is better for me?

FDG: That's a very individual thing. Perhaps your intuition can guide you. Feel free to call to discuss your particular goals and needs. My number is (415) 750-1205.

Q: How does a teleseminar work?

FDG: First, let's talk about it logistically. All you need is your telephone to enjoy a shamanic teleseminar that gives you the benefits of 3rd Road training wherever you

live. TOTAL COST consists of enrollment fee, paid to me, plus long distance charges to Las Vegas (the area code for the event's "tele-bridge"). Just call long distance then pay the charges on your phone bill. Long distance rates for a 55 minute class can be \$6.00.

A group meets on the same day of the week for six or seven consecutive weeks at 6:00 pm (California time). Meetings consist of riveting, effective 55 minute-long lessons. A small group allows for dynamic, focused sessions that support your uniquely personal goals and dreams. Sessions are interactive and give you life-changing assignments to apply between meetings. Which brings us to how a teleseminar works shamanically.

In my shaman's tele-hut I use traditional Celtic teaching methods. After all, the dreamworld, other world, alternate reality, is a place shamans walk with their students. We can get there just as easily meeting by phone.

It's not just me lecturing at you for an hour, it's really magical, and you get to ask all the questions you need.

The teleseminars have proven to be a truly viable means to teach shamanism in a wholistic, rather than dry, didactic, way. Even more exciting, it's clear one can also teach a full tradition through this venue. I am still creating the curriculum, so students now enrolled are pioneers. The two year training develops bit by bit, and, as it does, so does the warmth and togetherness of 3rd Road's teleseminar community. And so does our depth of magical expertise, spiritual growth, and mystic awareness. I am grateful to the students involved in this at the starting point. What a journey we share.

I create a virtual-temple with a gentle opening ritual and wholesome environment. With long experience as a spiritual guide, I can build a sacred virtual-grove where we can learn, celebrate and heal our spirits. I also trained to be a teleseminar leader; this helps me facilitate not only meaningful dialogues, but transforming ritual-experiences.

You enjoy the same safe, ethical, relaxed, and fun space as in the Mystic Rose classes. Instead of impersonal, glib teachings, I try to offer you relevant ideas and practical tools, and, if you desire, directly address your personal issues. Tele-classes are right for *your* unique goals, challenges, and dreams.

Class Schedules

For more information, go [here](#). You'll receive email notice of upcoming classes, their prices and curriculum details, and the like. If you need other information call (415) 750-1205 but please do not e-mail me. I'm happy to talk as long as you need by phone but current injuries severely limit e-mail use. Or you can write to me at:

The 3rd Road
POB 210307

San Francisco, CA 94121

"There's the road to heaven, and there's the road to hell, and there? That's the road to Faerie."

-- Thomas, the Rhymer

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<http://www.feritradition.org/essays.htm>

3 captures

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About this capture

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The Feri Tradition of Witchcraft

Essays

"The Faery Tradition", by Anna Korn

"The Feri Tradition", by Steve Hewell

"The Feri Tradition: Vicia Line",
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Feri-tradition entry @ Wikipedia

"What is the F(a)eri(e) Tradition?",
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<http://www.lilithslantern.com/Faery%20Trad.htm>

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The Faery Tradition
By Anna Korn

Among the distinguishing features of the Faery tradition is the use of a Faery Power which characterizes the lineage. It is an ecstatic, rather than a fertility, tradition. Strong emphasis is placed on sensual experience and awareness, including sexual mysticism, which is not limited to heterosexual expression. In this, as in the general spirit of spiritual exploration, there is more risk-taking encouraged than in other Wiccan

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The Blue God

Image ©2001 Storm Faerywolf

collective unconscious. The Gods are real, with a system of morality different from our own, and we have a responsibility to them. The Faery Tradition, in common with initiatory lineages of the Craft which practice possession, is a mystery tradition of power, mystery, danger, ecstasy, and direct communication with divinity. This is in contrast to traditions which practice psychodrama or psychotherapy through ritual. The negative side of this style of working is that we have a lot of initiates who did not return unscathed from between the worlds. The tradition is not for everybody, and it is not amenable to mass attendance, like many Pagan paths.

There is a specific corpus of chants and liturgical material, much of it stemming from Victor Anderson and Gwydion Pendderwen, which provides a frame for many Circle-workings, and poetic creativity is highly valued. The magical practices of the Faery (or Feri, as Victor spells it) Tradition are heavily invocatory, to encourage possession, which relies mainly on psychic talent or sensitivity to occur. Rites are stylistically diverse, and may draw from many sources. There is an initiatory lineage, traceable to Victor or Cora Anderson or Gwydion Pendderwen. Victor tells of antecedents of the present tradition in the Harpy Coven in which he was involved in the 1920s and 30s in Oregon. Hallmarks of the tradition are possession of secret names, energy-working using pentacles and visualization of blue fire, a body of poetic and liturgical material, deities and archetypes specific to the Tradition, the doctrine of the Three Selves, a cingulum of a specific color, a "tribal" or "clan" feel to the coven, the use of the horned (sometimes called "inverted") pentagram, and the honoring of a warrior ethic. For example, we are urged not to coddle weakness, support others in insincerities or self-deceptions, or to submit one's own Life force to anyone or anything, which leads to a fierce openness called the "Black Heart of Innocence." The Faery Tradition is gender-equal, and all sexual orientations seem able to find a niche. For many, there is a strong identification with the realms of Faery and with shape-shifting.

Although Victor is universally recognized as the founding teacher of the tradition, it is possible to identify influences which shaped the tradition before its present form evolved. There is a strong African diasporic influence, primarily Dahomean-Haitian, and the Three Selves theory is an outgrowth of Huna beliefs. Neither is Victor the only source for material presently within the tradition. Each initiate seems to draw the tradition in a new direction and uncover new ground. Some practitioners, such as Gwydion and Eldri Littlewolf, went deeply into shamanic forms. Gwydion also worked extensively with Celtic religion, even learning Welsh early in his Wiccan training. Other

influences (Arica, Tibetan meditation, and Ceremonial Magick) entered as Gabriel Caradoc began teaching. Victor, Gwydion, Caradoc, Brian Dragon and Paladin wrote darkly beautiful ritual poetry and liturgy. Gabriel's classes provided an excellent training in magical visualization and his students continue his teachings. Poet Francesca De Grandis and songwriter Sharon Knight have added their inspiration to the corpus of material. Starhawk has used concepts developed in the Faery Tradition in expressing her beliefs and practice, and has given the clearest explanations widely available of concepts such as the Three Selves or the Iron Pentacle.

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feri_Tradition

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The "Feri Tradition" (also "Faery", "Fairy", "Faerie" etc.) is an initiatory mystery tradition of Witchcraft. It is an ecstatic, rather than a Fertility, tradition stemming from the teachings of Victor and Cora Anderson. Strong emphasis is placed on sensual experience and awareness, including sexual mysticism, which is not limited to heterosexual expression. In this, as in the general spirit of spiritual exploration, there is more risk-taking encouraged than in many Wiccan traditions which may have specific laws limiting behavior, and there is a certain amorality historically associated with the Tradition. Among the distinguishing features of the Faery tradition is the use of a specific Faery Power or energetic current which characterizes the lineage. Feri witches often see themselves as "fey": not black, not white, outside social definitions, on the road to Faeryland, either mad or poetical. Edgewalkers. They know that much of reality is unseen, or at least has uncertain boundaries. There is a deep respect for the wisdom of Nature, a love of beauty, and an appreciation of bardic and mantic creativity. Core teachings acknowledged by many of the branches of the tradition include the doctrines of the Three Souls, the Black Heart of Innocence, the Iron and Pearl pentacles, as well as an awareness of "energy ecology", which encourages practitioners to never give away or to waste their personal power, preferring instead techniques designed towards transmuting "negative" energy into a pure and more useful form. Trance experiences and personal connection with the Divine are at the heart of this path, which has led to a wide variety of practices throughout the larger body of the tradition. ==History and Lines of the Feri Tradition== "Victor Anderson" started teaching the Feri Tradition, then known as Vicia, more-or-less in its modern form in the 1940s. He began initiating people on an individual basis into the tradition before the 1950's. According to "Cora Anderson", Victor received a letter in 1960 (other accounts say it was a phone call) from several witches in Italy, among them Leo Martello, asking him to form a coven in California. During the 1950's and 60's, Victor's Craft "foster-son," Gwydion_Pendderwen (Tom deLong) worked with him, and helped to edit and publish Victor's book, Thorns of the Blood Rose. Gwydion brought in the name "Faery" (later changed to "Feri" to avoid confusion with R.J. Stewart's Fairy work), emphasized Celtic origins almost exclusively in his own practice, with a smattering of vodou; other teachers have emphasized the Hawaiian, the African-diaspora, or even traced the lineage back to the Attacotti, who were small dark possibly southern European settlers in Scotland thousands of years

ago. Gwydion later purchased and moved to Annwfn, 55 acres (223,000 m²) of land in Mendocino county he later gift-deeded to the Church_of_All_Worlds, and worked psychedelic group Shamanic and vodou rituals. Gwydion produced a large number of articles, rituals, poems, and songs before his death in 1982. There is a line of Feri descended from Gwydion, who was known as Watchmaker. Not much is known about this line, as its practitioners are quite reclusive. "Alison Harlow", initiated by Gwydion in the early 1970s, brought in a current of Gardnerianism to her Coven/lineage, "Vanthi". Vanthi still teaches as a Coven. Their practice is quite different from other lines. They initiate students first and train them afterward, and this training is overseen by the entire coven. "Eldri Littlewolf" met Victor and Cora in 1969 but didn't get initiated into Feri until five years later; she, "Gabriel Carillo" and "Stephen Hewell" were the basis of coven "Silver Wheel", [later "Korythalia", and finally "Bloodrose"]. Silver Wheel was formed in the Winter of 1975-76, and ceased in 1980. Gabriel taught his first classes under the name of Bloodrose. Gabriel's line became known as Bloodrose, and has many descendants who are still teaching, as is Gabriel. "Stephen Hewell" is also still teaching where he now lives in Atlanta, Ga.; his website is <http://www.southernferi.com> "Compost Coven" was formed in the early 1970s. The founding High Priestess, "Starhawk", had been initiated into the Faery tradition; but strands of many traditions, learned both from personal contact with Witches and from books, added to the archetypal materials which arose from dreams and group trancework, were woven by the original Composters to form a web of unique design, unlike that of any other group. The Compost Tradition lives on in the (non-Feri) circle of the Winged Toads and in the (Feri) "DustBunnies" line taught by "Valerie Walker". Compost's website is at <http://www.compostcoven.org> "Mandorla" Coven was founded by initiates of Victor and Cora Anderson, and teaches a form of Feri known as "Vicia". This line uses material taught by the Andersons in the '80s and '90s and differs somewhat from the majority of Feri being taught today. They trace their lineage directly to Victor and Cora. They tend to initiate first and teach afterward, are more improvisational and less scripted than Bloodrose-descended lines. Their website and bookstore, through which works by Victor and Cora can be ordered, is at <http://www.lilithslantern.com> "Thorn Coyle" is a Feri and Reclaiming teacher who studied directly with Victor. She blends many influences into her teaching, offering 2-year apprenticeships in specific cities. She has published a book of her Feri teachings called "Evolutionary Witchcraft". Her line is called "Morningstar Feri", and she does not offer many initiations. Her work and schedule can be seen at <http://www.thorncoyle.com> "Storm Faerywolf" is an artist, poet, writer, initiate and teacher who was originally trained in the Bloodrose-derived lineage of the Feri tradition. He has also studied other forms of the tradition which he incorporates into his teachings, and has published a book of poetry, spells, and devotional art called "The Stars Within the Earth". His work and schedule can be found at <http://www.faerywolf.com> Among the breakaway lines which depart considerably from the mainstream of Feri are "Brian Dragon"'s "Draconian Pictish-Elven Witchcraft" at <http://www.pictdom.org/> Brian (Tony Spurlock) says: "Pictish-Elven" is meant to signify a subset or offshoot of the so-called Feri or Fairy Tradition as adumbrated by Victor Anderson and represented by the late Gwydion Pendderwen, Starhawk (especially in the first book), and "Francesca De Grandis", author of the recent *Be a Goddess*. ... The "Pictish" element is meant to bring back to the fore one central thread of the Tradition --

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2004 2005 2007

About this capture

: "For other uses, see Witch_(disambiguation) The term "witchcraft" (and "witch") is a controversial one with a complicated history. Witchcraft is viewed differently in different cultures around the globe. Used with entirely different contexts, and within entirely different cultural references, it can take on distinct and often contradictory meanings. Each culture has its own particular body of concepts dealing with magic, Religion, benevolent and harmful Spirits, and Ritual; and these ideas do not find obvious equivalents in other cultures. Sometimes witchcraft is used to refer, broadly, to the practice of magic, and has a connotation similar to Sorcery. Depending on the values of the community, witchcraft in this sense may be regarded with varying degrees of suspicion and hostility, or with ambivalence, being neither intrinsically good nor evil. Members of some religions have applied the term witchcraft in a pejorative sense to refer to all magical or ritual practices other than those sanctioned by their own doctrines, though this has become less common, at least in the Western_world. According to some religious doctrines, all forms of magic are labeled witchcraft, and are either proscribed or treated as superstitious. Such religions consider their own ritual practices to be not at all magical, but rather simply variations of Prayer. Witchcraft is also used to refer, narrowly, to the practice of magic in an exclusively "inimical" sense. If the community accepts magical practice in general, then there is typically a clear separation between witches (in this sense) and the terms used to describe legitimate practitioners. This use of the term is most often found in accusations against individuals who are suspected of causing harm in the community by way of supernatural means. Belief in witches of this sort have been common among the indigenous populations of the world, including Africa, Asia and the Americas. On occasion such accusations have led to Witch_hunts. Under the monotheistic religions of the Levant (primarily Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), witchcraft came to be associated with Heresy, rising to a fever pitch among the Catholics, Protestants, and Secular leadership of the European Late Medieval/Early_Modern period. Throughout this time, the concept of witchcraft came increasingly to be interpreted as a form of Devil_worship. Accusations of witchcraft were frequently combined with other charges of heresy against such groups as the Cathars and Waldensians. In the modern Western world, witchcraft accusations have often accompanied the Satanic_Ritual_Abuse Hysteria. Such accusations are a counterpart to blood libel of various kinds, which may be found throughout history across the globe. Recently, witchcraft has taken on a distinctly positive connotation among Wiccans and other Neopagans as the ritual element of their religious beliefs. A great deal of confusion and conflict has arisen from attempts by one group or another to canonize their particular definition of the term. ==Practices typically considered to be witchcraft== "Influencing another person's body or property":

Practices to which the "witchcraft" label are applied are those which influence another person's body or property against his or her will, or which are believed, by the person doing the labeling, to undermine the social or religious order. Some modern commentators, especially Neopagan ones, consider the malefic nature of witchcraft to be a Christian projection. However, the concept of a magic-worker influencing another person's body or property against his or her will was present in many cultures before introduction of Monotheism, as there are traditions in both folk magic and religious magic that have the purpose of countering witchcraft or identifying witches from those times. Many examples can be found in ancient texts, such as those from Egypt and

Babylonia. Where witchcraft is believed to have the power to influence the body or possessions, witches become a credible cause for disease, sickness in animals, bad luck, sudden death, impotence and other such misfortunes. Folk magic of a more benign and socially acceptable sort may then be employed to turn the witchcraft aside, or identify the supposed witch so that punishment may be carried out. In some cases, the folk magic used to identify or protect against witches is virtually indistinguishable from that used by the witches themselves. "Poppets or effigies":

There are several magical practices that are associated with witchcraft, to such a degree that those who use them were given the label 'witch' by Westerners, irrespective of the culture in which they appear. The most immediately recognisable practice is the making of poppets or effigies. Witches were believed to create figures in clay, wax, or from rags, to represent people, and the actions performed upon these figures were believed to be transferred to the subject. "To some others at these times he [the Devil] teacheth how to make pictures of wax or clay. That by the roasting thereof, the persons that they beare the name of, may be continually melted or die away by continually sickness." ::Source: James_I, "Demonologie" The making of wax figures was also a means of "countering" witchcraft and turning the magic back on the caster. "Conjuring the dead":

Necromancy, the conjuring of the spirits of the dead, is also regarded as a typical witchcraft practice; the Biblical 'Witch' of Endor is supposed to have performed it, and it is among the witchcraft practices condemned by Aelfric. "Yet fares witches to where roads meet, and to heathen burials with their phantom craft and call to them the devil, and he comes to them in the dead man's likeness, as if he from death arises, but she cannot cause that to happen, the dead to arise through her wizardry." ::Source: Aelfric's Homilies "Other practices":

A host of other powers were said to be received through demonic compacts, such as those of riding through the air on a broomstick, assuming different shapes at will, and tormenting a witch's chosen victims. It was believed that an imp or "familiar spirit" was placed at the disposal of practitioners, able and willing to perform any service that might be needed to further their nefarious purposes. Supernatural aid is also invoked to compass the death of a particularly undesirable individual, to awaken the passion of love in those who are the objects of desire, to call up the dead, or to bring calamity or impotence upon enemies, rivals, and fancied oppressors. For this reason, "witchcraft" practices are typically forbidden by law where belief in them exists (as well as being hated and feared by the general populace) while "folk magic" is tolerated or even accepted wholesale by the people, even if the orthodox establishment objects to it.

==Etymology== The origins of the term "witch" are highly disputed. That the word derives directly from Old English. More words believed to found the existence of Witchcraft are Witan (meaning Wise Person), "wicca" and/or "Wicce" is hard to doubt, but the origins of the Old English words are more problematic. Contraction of "witega" ('wise man, prophet') is possible. Low German contains "wicker" (soothsayer). Other possible connections include the Old English "wigle" (divination), the Proto-Germanic *"wikkejaz" (necromancer), the Gothic "weihs" (holy), and the English words "victim" (in its original meaning for someone killed in a religious Ritual) and "wicked". Many neo-pagan sources assert that because the root "wik-" is associated with words meaning "to bend", the original meaning of the word was "one who bends the natural

order" (by using magic). <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=wicce>. Colloquially, the term "witch" is applied almost exclusively to women, although in earlier English the term was applied to men too. Most people would call male witches Sorcerers, Wizards, or Warlocks; however, modern self-identified witches and Wiccans continue to use the term "witch" for all who practice witchcraft. ==European witchcraft== : "Main article: "European_witchcraft"" Image:Sejdmnen.jpg had male Völvas (shamans) tied up and left on a skerry at ebb.]] The characterization of the witch in Europe is not derived from a single source. Popular neopagan beliefs suggest that witches were female Shamans who were made into malicious figures by Christian propaganda. This is an oversimplification and presumes that a recognizable folklore figure must derive from a single historical precedent (a female, maligned magic-worker). The familiar witch of folklore and popular superstition is a combination of numerous influences. The characterization of the witch, rather than being a caricature of a Pagan priestess, developed over time. <http://www.geocities.com/eildontree/reading/christianwitch.html> The advent of Christianity suggests that potential Christians, comfortable with the use of magic as part of their daily lives, expected Christian clergy to work magic of a form superior to the old Pagan way. While Christianity competed with Pagan religion, this concern was paramount, only lessening in importance once Christianity was the dominant religion in most of Europe. In place of the old Pagan magic methodology, the Church placed a Christian methodology involving saints and divine relics — a short step from the old Pagan techniques of amulets and talismans. Traditional European witchcraft beliefs, such as those typified in the confessions of the Pendle_Witches, commonly involve a Diabolical_pact or at least an appeal to the intervention of the spirits of evil<http://www.pendlewitches.co.uk/>. The witches or Wizards addicted to such practices were alleged to adjure Jesus and the Sacraments, observe "the witches' sabbath" - performing infernal rites which often took the shape of a parody of the Mass or the offices of the Church - pay Divine honour to the Prince of Darkness, and in return receive from him Preternatural powers. Down through history, the Catholic Church and European society have not always been obsessed with hunting witches and blaming them for bad occurrences. St. Boniface declared in the eighth century that belief in witches is unchristian. The emperor Charlemagne decreed that the burning of supposed witches was a pagan custom that would be punished by the death penalty. In 820 the Bishop of Lyon and others repudiated the belief that witches could make bad weather, fly in the night, and change their shape. This denial was accepted into Church law until it was reversed in later centuries as the witch-craze gained force. Other rulers such as King Coloman of Hungary declared that witch-hunts should cease because witches do not exist. The Church did not invent the idea of witchcraft as a potentially harmful force whose practitioners should be put to death. This idea is commonplace in pre-Christian religions and is a logical consequence of belief in magic. According to the scholar Max Dashu, the concept of medieval witch contained many of its elements even before the emergence of Christianity. These can be found in Bacchanalias, especially in the time when they were led by priestess Paculla_Annia (188-186). In England, the provision of this curative magic was the job of a Witch_doctor, also known as a cunning man, White_witch, or wise woman. The term "witch doctor" was in use in England before it came to be associated with Africa. Toad_doctors were also credited with the ability to undo witchcraft. (Other folk magicians had their own purviews. Girdle-measurers

specialised in diagnosing ailments caused by fairies, while magical cures for more mundane ailments, such as burns or toothache, could be had from charmers.) : "In the north of England, the superstition lingers to an almost inconceivable extent. Lancashire abounds with witch-doctors, a set of quacks, who pretend to cure diseases inflicted by the devil... The witch-doctor alluded to is better known by the name of the cunning man, and has a large practice in the counties of Lincoln and Nottingham." ::Source: Charles_Mackay, Extraordinary_Popular_Delusions_and_the_Madness_of_Crowds

Such "cunning-folk" did not refer to themselves as witches and objected to the accusation that they were such. Records from the Middle Ages, however, make it appear that it was, quite often, not entirely clear to the populace whether a given practitioner of magic was a witch or one of the cunning-folk. In addition, it appears that much of the populace was willing to approach either of these groups for healing magic and divination. When a person was known to be a witch, the populace would still seek to employ their healing skills; however, as was not the case with cunning-folk, members of the general population would also hire witches to curse their enemies. The important distinction is that there are records of the populace reporting alleged witches to the authorities as such, whereas cunning folk were not so incriminated; they were more commonly prosecuted for accusing the innocent or defrauding people of money. The long-term result of this amalgamation of distinct types of magic-worker into one is the considerable present-day confusion as to what witches actually did, whether they harmed or healed, what role (if any) they had in the community, whether they can be identified with the "witches" of other cultures and even whether they existed as anything other than a projection. Present-day beliefs about the witches of history attribute to them elements of the folklore witch, the Charmer, the cunning man or wise woman, the diviner and the astrologer. Powers typically attributed to European witches include turning food poisonous or inedible, flying on broomsticks, casting spells, and creating fear and local chaos. See for example: * "Malleus_Maleficarum" * Witchhunts * Witchcraft_trials * Flying_ointments == Middle_Eastern witchcraft == == Ancient Middle_Eastern and Near_Eastern beliefs == The belief in witchcraft and its practice seem to have been widespread in the past. Both in ancient Egypt and in Babylonia it played a conspicuous part, as existing records plainly show. It will be sufficient to quote a short section from the Code_of_Hammurabi (about 2000 B.C.). It is there prescribed, :If a man has laid a charge of witchcraft and has not justified it, he upon whom the witchcraft is laid shall go to the holy river; he shall plunge into the holy river and if the holy river overcome him, he who accused him shall take to himself his house.

===Witchcraft in the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible, Old Testament)=== In the Bible references to witchcraft are frequent, and the strong condemnations of such practices which we read there do not seem to be based so much upon the supposition of Fraud as upon the "Abomination" of the magic in itself. (See Deuteronomy 18:11-12; Exodus 22:18, "wizards thou shalt not suffer to live" - A.V. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live".) Many bible scholars have noted that in the original hebrew the word "M'khasephah"(translated in the King James as "witch") means "someone who malevolently uses spoken curses to hurt people", which the modern Wiccan_Rede specifically forbids of it's practitioners to do. The whole narrative of Saul's visit to the witch of En Dor (I Samuel 28) implies belief in the reality of the witch's evocation of the shade of Samuel; and from Leviticus 20:27: "A man or woman in whom there is a pythonical or divining Spirit, dying let them

die: they shall stone them: Their blood be upon them", we should naturally infer that the divining spirit was not believed to be a mere imposture. === Witchcraft in the New Testament === The prohibitions of Sorcery in the New Testament leave the same impression (Galatians 5:20, compared with Revelation 21:8; 22:15; and Acts 8:9; 13:6). Supposing that the belief in witchcraft were held to be an idle Superstition, it would be strange that the suggestion should nowhere be made that the Evil of these practices only lay in the pretending to the possession of powers which did not really exist. There is some debate, however, as to whether the word used in Galatians and Revelation, "Pharmakeia", is properly translated as "sorcery", as the word was commonly used to describe malicious use of drugs as in poisons, Contraceptives, and Abortifacients. === Jewish views of witchcraft === Jewish law views the practice of witchcraft as being laden with Idolatry and/or Necromancy; both being serious theological and practical offenses in Judaism. According to Traditional Judaism, it is acknowledged that while magic may exist, it is forbidden. The only supernatural belief Jews should maintain is the belief in God. It should be noted that some Orthodox Jews study Kabbalah (Jewish esoteric mysticism) which contains magical elements; however, their practices use terminology that varies greatly from witchcraft. Since The Enlightenment, most Jewish people have abandoned a belief in the Kabbalah, although it is currently becoming popularized by some Jewish groups such as Chabad-Lubavitch and Jewish Renewal. Some Neopagans study and practice forms of Magery based on a syncretism between classical Jewish mysticism and modern witchcraft. (See "The Witches Qabalah", in the list of references below.) These practitioners tend to identify with Judeo-Paganism (also known as Jewish Paganism), and/or practice Jewitchery, or Jewish Witchcraft. These individuals and groups either borrow from existing Jewish magical traditions or reconstruct rituals based on Judaism and NeoPaganism. Several references on these subjects include Ellen Cannon Reed's book "The Witches Qabala: The Pagan Path and the Tree of Life", "The Hebrew Goddess", by Raphael Patai, and the forthcoming book "Magickal Judaism: Blending Pagan and Jewish Practice", by Jennifer Hunter.

""See also:"" Christian_views_on_witchcraft == African witchcraft == Africans have a wide range of views of traditional religions. African Christians typically accept Christian dogma as their counterparts in Latin America and Asia. The term Witch doctor, often attributed to African "Inyanga", has been misconstrued to mean "a healer who uses witchcraft" rather than its original meaning of "one who diagnoses and cures maladies caused by witches". Combining Roman Catholic beliefs and practices and traditional West African religious beliefs and practices are several syncretic religions in The Americas, including Voudun, Obeah, Candomblé, and Santería. In Southern African traditions, there are three classifications of somebody who uses magic. The "Thakathi" is usually translated into English as "witch", and is a spiteful person who operates in secret to harm others. The "Sangoma" is a diviner, somewhere on a par with a Fortune teller, and is employed in detecting illness, predicting a person's future (or advising them on which path to take), or identifying the guilty party in a crime. She also practices some degree of Medicine. The "inyanga" is often translated as "witch doctor" (though many Southern Africans resent this implication, as it perpetuates the mistaken belief that a "witch doctor" is in some sense a "practitioner" of witchcraft). The "inyanga"'s job is to heal illness and injury and provide customers with magical items for everyday use. Of these three categories the "thakatha" is almost

exclusively female, the "sangoma" is usually female, and the "inyanga" is almost exclusively male. ==Witches in modern culture== Today, few people believe in witches that can curse enemies, change shapes, or fly. However, since the emergence of the witchcraft-inspired religion of Wicca in the 1940s a growing number of people have called themselves witches. While most of western culture continues to assign negative connotations to the word, Wiccans do not consider it a derogatory term, nor do they associate it with Satanism. In fact, many Wiccans wish to claim the term "witch" and assign positive meanings to it. In 1968, a group of radical politically active women formed a protest organization in the City_of_New_York called W.I.T.C.H., standing for "Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell". This was a short-lived group that did not have any noticeable impact on the modern development of witchcraft, except possibly Dianic craft, but is often cited because of its colourful acronym. Witches are iconically associated with Halloween, although Wiccans generally prefer to celebrate Samhain. Samhain takes place on November 1st, while Halloween is on the 31st of October. Both holidays are often seen as being metaphorically similar in meaning. This is not coincidence. Christianity had a basic contempt for the supernatural overtones of the festival. The association between "witches" and Halloween possibly came from vilification of practitioners of the Celtic celebration of the last harvest. Witches have come more into the mainstream in the last few decades, now seen often as common pop-culture figures. Teenage and young adult witches have been the focus or appeared in the movies "The Craft", "Practical_Magic", and "Blair_Witch_Project_2" (the sequel to The_Blair_Witch_Project), as well as the Television programs "Bewitched", "Buffy_the_Vampire_Slayer", "Charmed", "Sabrina_the_Teenage_Witch", and some episodes of "The_X-Files". Such neo-Gothic portrayals bear little relationship to Wicca, or even a Christian view of witches. In almost all cases witches portrayed in movies and TV shows today are attractive women who have supernatural powers. In J. K. Rowling's Harry_Potter books, a witch is a female with magical powers. In America, witches are often associated with the New_England region of the country, because this is the area that the infamous Salem_witch_trials occurred. It is possible that this regional association also continues to resonate with the public because witches are symbolic of female empowerment, and New England is also among the more politically progressive areas of the country. Recent research does not, however, support the media's portrayal of witchcraft and Wicca. In "Witchcraft out of the Shadows" (2004), Leo Ruickbie presents findings that demonstrate that Wicca and other forms of modern Witchcraft religion are not exclusively female nor teenage. ===Distinguishing witchcraft from other forms of magic=== Among some groups within the modern occult movement, witchcraft is typically distinguished from folk magic, religious magic, and ceremonial magic. Modern self-identified witches (especially practitioners of Wicca) are likely to use the term witchcraft to refer to folk magic. Folk magic and witchcraft are not identical, but they are very similar. Both are concerned with the producing of effects using Supernatural methods which (though arcane) are held to have power in their own right, whether or not they involve the invocation of deities, spirits, or other supernatural beings. In this way they differ from both prayer and religious magic, which derive not from the ritual elements themselves, but depend upon the power and consent of a deity or deities. Ceremonial magic almost always refers to Hermetic_magic being practiced in an ornate and precise manner. ===Distinction of The Craft from Wicca=== Though

sometimes used interchangeably, "Wicca" and "The Craft" are not the same thing. The confusion comes, understandably, because both practitioners of Wicca and practitioners of The Craft call themselves witches. In addition, many, but not all, Wiccans practice witchcraft and likewise not all witches are Wiccans. From a neopagan perspective, Wicca refers to the religion; the worship of the God (also known as the Consort) and the Goddess (or just Goddess), and the Sabbat and Esbat rituals. Witchcraft, on the other hand, is considered the craft of magic. Practicing The Craft involves the conscious manipulation of energy to manifest desired results. This practice can be learned and perfected separate from any religious ideology, and thus requires no belief in specific gods or goddesses. It is a learned skill, not a spiritual path. There are other Pagan witches, "Hindu witches", "Buddhist witches", etc. who also practice witchcraft; however, Christians usually do not practice witchcraft because of their beliefs being against "sorcery" as noted in the Bible. There is a rise however in Christian witches. This is a crossover of Christian beliefs and the Craft. Most follow either the Wiccan idea of "An it harm none, do as ye will" or the traditional Golden Rule. The idea is that of God (and sometimes angels) as the central focus (some of these witches view Mother Earth as the Goddess commonly used in Wicca). Earth plays an important role in the everyday life of Christian witches. As with most witches, they follow their own paths while always working towards a greater good. Many of them feel that prayer is a form of witchcraft. Others feel their priest is actually performing witchcraft when they are in service but it is just called something else. There is a variety of magics practiced by these witches. Unfortunately, "witch" has had bad connotations and many people that do practice witchcraft will not admit it, (ie: make a birthday wish, make a wish on a wishbone, pray at night, predict/sense future occurrences). The distinctions between neopaganism and witchcraft can not be clearly distinguished. There is crossover between the pagan/neopagan religions and witchcraft. For example, the mention of goddesses in spells and the performance of spells during Sabbat rituals are found in both. However, the differences mentioned above are the general distinctions made between the two terms. It should be noted that The Craft as a descriptor for witchcraft is a wholly modern concept, introduced precisely in order to distinguish the religion of Wicca from other practices that involve magic. This is a result of the increasing diversity in modern neopaganism, which was previously dominated by Wicca. ===Sybil Leek and Raymond Buckland=== It has been said that Raymond Buckland was the Father of American Wicca and Sybil Leek was the mother of the Craft. Aleister Crowley became a frequent visitor to the home of "Sybil Leek" (February 22, 1917, Stoke-on Trent, England - October 26, 1982, Melbourne, Florida) when she was only nine years old. Sybil Leek was one of the most publicized Witches of the 20th century, having gone public in the 1960's. Leek said that her witchcraft was different from that of Gerald Gardner. She was widely known for her psychic predictions of the Kennedy assassinations and the election of Richard M. Nixon as President of the United States. Leek wrote approximately 60 different books covering a wide range of subjects, including astrology, witchcraft, curses, dreams, fortune telling, healing, numerology, phrenology, reincarnation, spells, and telepathy. "All human beings have magic in them. The secret is to know how to use this magic." - Sybil Leek, 1972. "Raymond Buckland" was responsible for introducing Gardnerian Witchcraft into America in 1964. Known as "The Father of American Wicca," he is also the founder of his own tradition of Witchcraft

called Seax-Wica. After 28 years working in leading the craft in America, Buckland retired from active participation in 1992. Books By Sybil Leek *A fool and a tree Copyright © 1964" *A Ring of Magic Islands by Sybil Leek, Stephen Leek Copyright © 1976" *A SHOP IN THE HIGH STREET Publisher: McKay Publishing Copyright © 1964" *Astrological Guide to Financial Success, Copyright © 1972 " *Astrological Guide to Love and Sex, Copyright © 1969" *Astrological guide to the presidential candidates Copyright © 1972" *Astrology and Love Copyright © 1983" *Bicycle: That Curious Invention by Sybil Leek, Stephen Leek Copyright © 1974" *Cast Your Own Spell Copyright © 1972" *Complete Art of Witchcraft Copyright © 1973" *Diary of a witch Copyright © 1968" *Dreams Copyright © 1976 " *Driving Out the Devils Copyright © 1975" *ESP--The Magic Within You. Copyright © 1972" *Have Mania--Will Collect! Copyright © 1964" *Herbs : Medicine and Mysticism Copyright © 1975" *How to Be Your Own Astrologer Copyright © 1970" *How to Succeed Through Astrology Copyright © 1973" *Inside Bellevue Copyright © 1976" *Moon Signs Copyright © 1977" *My life in astrology Copyright © 1972" *Numerology; The Magic of Numbers Copyright © 1969." *Phrenology Copyright © 1970" *Reincarnation : The Second Chance Copyright © 1974" *Star Speak : Your Body Language from the Stars Copyright © 1975" *Sybil Leek's Astrological Guide to Successful Everyday Living Copyright © 1970" *Sybil Leek's Book of Curses Copyright © 1976" *Sybil Leek's Book of the curious and the occult Copyright © 1976" *Sybil Leek's Book of Fortune Telling, Copyright © 1969 " *Sybil Leek's of Herbs- Copyright © 1980" *Sybil Leek on exorcism : driving out the devils Copyright © 1976" *Sybil Leek Zodiac of Love Copyright © 1974" *Telepatia Copyright © 1995" *Telepathy : The Respectable Phenomenon Copyright © 1971" *The Assassination Chain Copyright © 1976" *THE ASTROLOGICAL COOKBOOK Copyright © 1968" *The Best of Sybil Leek Edited By Glen A. Hilken (Sybil Leek) Copyright © 1974" *The Jackdaw & The Witch (first Published as Mr. Hotfoot Jackson) Copyright © 1966 " *The Magic Within You Copyright © 1971" *The Night Voyagers : You and Your Dreams Copyright © 1975" *The Story of Faith Healing Copyright © 1973" *The Sybil Leek Book of Fortune Telling Copyright © " *The tree that conquered the world Copyright © 1969" *Tomorrow's Headlines Today Copyright © (1974" == Theories of Neopagan witchcraft == Some neopagans believe that witchcraft exists as a way of doing good, and eschew any evil usages (See the Wiccan_Rede and the Rule_of_Three_(Wiccan)). Their belief is sometimes very similar to the belief of Christians in prayer, that the Divine will acknowledge and grant answers to a ritual given in a Deity's name. More often, however, modern neopagans believe that the power of witchcraft comes about primarily in the way it acts upon the person, not due to any divine intervention. Many neopagans, though, also believe that witchcraft is a way of working directly with divine forces. Many neopagans believe that people are comprised of three selves. The three selves are the Talking Self (the conscious mind), the Younger Self (the unconscious mind) and the Higher Self (the Soul, also called the Divine Self). It is believed that the unconscious (Younger Self) is not capable of speaking or of understanding speech, but understands and responds to symbolism. This is similar to the Eastern Christian trichotomy of the Greek words σῶμα ("soma"), ψυχή ("psyche"), and νοῦς ("nous"), wherein the "soma" is the living body, "psyche" is the "mind" as we normally use the term, and "nous" is the faculty capable of apprehending the Divine. It differs from the neopagan model in that it

assigns a place for the physical body "in and of itself" as part of a "whole" human being's spiritual existence. Therefore, to many neopagans the power of a ritual is in the way its symbolism speaks to the Younger Self. Psychology and medical research have shown that beliefs have an effect on one's perception of reality, and that beliefs and perception appear to effect behaviorial and other quantifiable physical changes; one well known example is the Placebo_effect. Some neopagans believe that witchcraft is a way of tapping into those forces. People who call themselves Neopagans are more likely to take this view. People who go by the term Wiccan are more likely to believe in divine action as ultimate cause. Not all Witches (people who practice witchcraft) consider themselves Wiccan or Neopagan, and vice versa. == See also == *Witchhunt *Witchcraft_trial *European_witchcraft *Catalan_mythology_about_witches *Witches_(Discworld) *Familiar *Flying_oointment *Hedgewitch *Lysa_Hora_(paranormal) *Occult *Osculum_infame *Seid_(shamanic_magic) *Sorcerer *Wyrd *List_of_Wiccans *List_of_fictional_witches *Cazi *Pointy_hat *Wicca {{Witchcraft}} == External links == * Articles on Witchcraft * Pagan Federation official web site * The home web site of the Traditional Craft Association * Withcraft in the Catholic Encyclopedia on (New Advent) * Modern Pagan Witchcraft * Bibliography for the Study of Magic Witchcraft and Religion, James Dow, Professor of Anthropology at Oakland University * Silver Broom Online Book of Shadows/Forum on Witchcraft and Magick. * Religious Tolerance.org - Witchcraft Tolerate Religions * Some historical notes on the witch-craze from a noted historian * Kabbalah On Witchcraft - A Jewish view (Audio) chabad.org == Additional Reading == Listed by date of publication: * Kramer, Heinrich and Springer, James, "Malleus Maleficarum [Hammer of the Witches]", 1486 * Scot, Reginald, "Discoverie of Witchcraft", England, 1584 * Mather, Cotton. " Wonders of the Invisible World", Boston, 1692. * Calef, Robert. "More wonders of the Invisible World", London, 1700. * Hansen, Joseph. "Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns und der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter". Bonn, 1901. * Malinowski, Bronislaw. "Magic, Science, and Religion". Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948. * Evans-Prichard, E. E. "Theories of Primitive Religion". Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965. * Mair, Lucy, "Witchcraft". New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969. * Kors, Alan C.; Peters, Edward. " Witchcraft in Europe, 1100-1700. A Documentary History". Philadelphia, 1972. * Heinsohn, Gunnar and Steiger, Otto, Die Vernichtung der weisen Frauen - Hexenverfolgung, Kinderwelten, Bevölkerungswissenschaft, Menschenproduktion. Beiträge zur Theorie und Geschichte von Bevölkerung und Kindheit. Munich, 1985. * Henningsen, Gustav; Tedeschi, John. "The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe. Studies on Sources and Methods". Dekalb, 1986. * Behringer, Wolfgang. "Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Deutschland". Munich, 1988. * Ankarloo, Bengt. Henningsen, Gustav, " Early Modern European Witchcraft. Centres and Peripheries". Oxford, 1990. * Beth, Rae. "Hedgewitch: A Guide to Solitary Witchcraft". Robert Hale, 1990. * Dunwich, Gerina. "Wicca Craft". Citadel Press, 1991. * Abrahams, Ray. "Witchcraft in contemporary Tanzania". Cambridge, 1994. * Rainbird, Ariadne; Rankine, David. "Magick Without Peers - A Course in Progressive Witchcraft".Capall Bann, 1997. * Harris, Nathaniel J. "Witcha: A Book of Cunning". Mandrake of Oxford, 2004. * Ruickbie, Leo. "Witchcraft Out of the Shadows: A Complete History". Robert Hale, 2004. * Stewart, Pamela J., Strathern, Andrew, "Witchcraft, Sorcery, Rumors, and Gossip". Cambridge University Press, 2004. * D'Este, Sorita Rankine, David, "Circle of

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Da:Heks De:Hexe Es:Bruja Fr:Sorcière It:Stregoneria Ja:魔女 Nl:Heks Pt:Bruxaria
Ru:Ведьма Fi:Noituus Sv:Häxa Uk:Відьма Zh:女巫

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fertility>

1,378 captures

9 Jun 2004 - 14 Dec 2025

Nov DEC Feb

15

2004 2005 2007

About this capture

"Fertility" is the ability of people or animals to produce healthy offspring in abundance. The term was usually applied to Females, but increasingly is applied to males as well, as common understanding of reproductive mechanisms increases and the importance of the Male role is better known. Human fertility depends on factors of Nutrition, Sexual_behavior, Culture, Instinct, Endocrinology, timing, Economics, way of life, and Emotions. Animal fertility is no less complex, and may display astounding mechanisms. The opposite is Infertility. Some Fertility_issues here. By extension fertility is also applied to farmlands and plants, and a large crop of sound fruits, seeds or vegetables is the expectation. The Fertility_rate is a demographic measure of the number of children per woman. Category:Fertility Cs:Plodnost_(rozcestník) Da:Frugtbarhed De:Fruchtbarkeit Es:Fertilidad Fr:Fertilité Lt:Vaisingumas Nl:Vruchtbaarheid Sv:Fertilitet <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicca>

1,673 captures

18 Jun 2004 - 8 Dec 2025

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2004 2005 2007

About this capture

:"This article is about the religion. For the Russian glamour model, see Vicca."
Image:pentacle-circumscribed.png (circumscribed): a symbol used by many Wiccans.]]
"Wicca" is a collective term for a group of Neopagan Religions that are found in many different countries, though most commonly in English-speaking cultures. The origins of Wicca are traceable to its alleged founder, a British civil servant named Gerald_Gardner. It was first openly revealed in 1954. However, there is some evidence that Wiccan theology was being developed as early as the 1920s. Since its founding, various related Wiccan traditions have evolved, or been adapted from, the original form, which is Gardnerian_Wicca. This is the name of the tradition that teaches the specific beliefs and practices established by Gerald Gardner. ==Definition== Gerald Gardner is credited with re-introducing the word 'Wicca' into the English_language, although he himself used the spelling Wica in his published work of 1954. The spelling "Wicca" is now used almost exclusively, (Seax-Wica being the only major use of the four-letter spelling). In Old English, "wicca" meant "A wizard, soothsayer, sorcerer, magician" (Bosworth, 1898 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicca#References>) (see Völva, male witch,

or Warlock). The term "warlock" is shunned in the greater Wiccan community due to the fact that it comes from the Old_English term for "oath-breaker."^{[[ref|warlock]]} An alternate translation exists, however (Old Norse: 'vardlokkur', meaning 'Wise man' or 'Wise wizard'), which makes accurate application of the term 'Warlock' somewhat problematic^{[[fact]]}. Generally, most Wiccans and Witches only use the term under the first definition, for someone that has been expelled from their coven because of revealing secrets of that particular coven, or for doing things that go against the rules of the coven (such as hexes and curses, also known as "black magic"), and the rules of Wicca. Some sources contend that the term "wicca" is related to Old English "Witan", meaning "wise man or counselor".^{[[fact]]} A few language scholars widely reject this as false Etymology, with the term deriving from the Old English 'wicce', meaning witch.^{[[fact]]} Nonetheless, Wicca is often called the "Craft of the Wise" as a result of this misconception. In actuality the word "Wicca" did not come into recent use until Gerald Gardner published his works. This is why many Wiccans believe that in order to class oneself as a "Wiccan" it would be necessary to have been initiated into a practising Gardenerian, Alexandrian, or other directly related coven. It appears that the word Wicca may be untraceable beyond the Old English period. Derivation from the Indo-European roots '*wic' or '*weik', meaning to bend or to turn, is incorrect by phonological understanding.^{[[fact]]} Though sometimes used interchangeably, "Wicca" and "witchcraft" are not the same thing. The confusion comes, understandably, because both practitioners of Wicca and practitioners of witchcraft are often called Witches. In addition, not all practitioners of Wicca are Witches, and not all Witches are practitioners of Wicca. Similarly, all Wiccans and most Witches are Pagans, but not all Pagans are Witches and Wiccans. The term Pagan (from Latin *pāganus* "country-dweller, civilian" from *pāgus* "rural district") can also mean anyone who is not Christian, Muslim or Jewish.^{[[fact]]} The term "Wicca" usually refers to the religion as a whole. This can be a reference to the initiatory group traditions, where initiates are assigned a degree and generally work in Covens, or to solitary Wicca, where practitioners self-dedicate themselves to a tradition and generally practice on their own. Both initiates and solitary Wiccans worship the Goddess, with most also choosing to worship the God, and both celebrate the Sabbats and Esbats. On the other hand, witchcraft requires no belief in specific gods or goddesses and is not a specific spiritual path. Thus, there are witches who practice a variety of religions besides Pagan ones, such as Judaism and Christianity. It is considered to be a learned skill in that it tends to focus on the casting of spells, herbalism, and the practice of magic. To add to the confusion, the term Witchcraft in popular older usage and in a modern historical or anthropological context means the use of black or evil magic, which is generally viewed as antithetical to Wiccan beliefs and activities. See The Craft or Witchcraft for more details on these differences. The Craft", "Buffy_the_Vampire_Slayer", and "Charmed" are dramatic fiction and should not be taken as factual, just as it should be noted that the fictional character Harry_Potter has nothing to do with historical witchcraft. ==History of Wicca==
=== Origins === The history of Wicca is much debated. Gardner claimed that the religion was a survival of matriarchal Pagan religions of pre-historic Europe (see Völva), taught to him by a woman known as "Dafo" or "Old Dorothy" (often assumed to be Dorothy_Clutterbuck,^{[[fact]]} although modern researchers such as Philip_Heselton have theorized that Dafo and Clutterbuck were two separate individuals). Others posit

that he invented it himself, following the thesis of Dr. Margaret Murray and sources such as "Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches" by Charles Godfrey Leland, and the practices of Freemasonry and Ceremonial magic. While Clutterbuck certainly existed, Ronald Hutton concluded that she is unlikely to have been involved in Gardner's Craft activities. Nonetheless, a widespread theory `{{fact}}` is that after Gardner retired from adventuring around the globe, he encountered Clutterbuck and her New Forest coven in the region. He was supposedly initiated into the New Forest coven in 1939, where he stayed for years until England's ban on witchcraft-related books was repealed. At this point, and later claiming to fear that the Craft would die out, `{{fact}}` he worked on his book "Witchcraft Today", releasing it in 1954. He followed it with "The Meaning of Witchcraft" in 1960. It is from these books that much of modern Wicca is derived. While the ritual format of Wicca is undeniably styled after late Victorian era occultism (even co-founder Doreen Valiente admits seeing influence from Crowley), the spiritual content is inspired by older Pagan faiths, with Buddhist and Hindu influences. Whether any historical connection to Pagan religion exists, the aspiration to emulate Pagan religion as it was understood at the time certainly does. Gardner probably had access to few, if any, traditional Pagan rites. The prevailing theory is that most of his rites were the result of an adaption of the works of Aleister Crowley. There is very little in the Wiccan rites that cannot be shown to have come from earlier extant sources. The original material is not cohesive and mostly takes the form of substitutions or expansions within unoriginal material, such as embellishment of specific portions Crowley's published and unpublished texts. Philip Heselton, writing in "Wiccan Roots" and later in "Gerald Gardner and the Cauldron of Inspiration", argues that Gardner was not the author of the Wiccan rituals but received them in good faith from an unknown source. (Doreen Valiente makes this claim regarding the "basic skeleton of the rituals," as Margot Adler puts it in "Drawing Down the Moon".) He notes that all the Crowley material that is found in the Wiccan rituals can be found in a single book, "The Equinox vol 3 no. 1" or "Blue Equinox". Gardner is not known to have owned or had access to a copy of this book. Some, such as Isaac Bonewits, have argued that Valiente and Heselton's evidence points to an early 20th century revival predating Gardner, rather than an intact old Pagan religion. The argument points to historical claims of Gardner's that agree with scholarship of a certain time period and contradict later scholarship. Bonewits writes, Somewhere between 1920 and 1925 in England some folklorists appear to have gotten together with some Golden Dawn Rosicrucians and a few supposed Fam-Trads to produce the first modern covens in England; grabbing eclectically from any source they could find in order to try and reconstruct the shards of their Pagan past. Crowley published the aforementioned Blue Equinox <http://the-equinox.org/vol3/eqv3n1/> in 1919. Today, Gardner's role in Wicca's origin is controversial. Some criticize him for breaking the secrecy of Wicca, and that his explanation for his fear that the Craft would die out wasn't substantial. `{{fact}}` Others hail him as the savior of the Craft, and argue that Wicca would still be unknown today had he not publicized it. `{{fact}}` The idea of primitive matriarchal religions, deriving ultimately from studies by Johann Jakob Bachofen, was popular in Gardner's day, both among academics (e.g., Erich Neumann, Margaret Murray) and amateurs such as Robert Graves. Later academics (e.g. Carl Jung and Marija Gimbutas) continued research in this area, and later still Joseph Campbell, Ashley Montagu and others

became fans of Gimbutas' theories of matriarchies in Old Europe. Matriarchal interpretations of the archaeological record and the criticism of such work continue to be matters of academic debate. Some academics carry on research in this area (such as the 2003 World Congress on Matriarchal Studies). Critics argue that matriarchal societies never actually existed and are an invention of researchers such as Margaret_Murray. The idea of a supreme Mother_Goddess was common in Victorian and Edwardian literature:{{fact}} the concept of a Horned_God — especially related to the gods Pan or Faunus — was less common, but still significant. Both of these ideas were widely accepted in academic literature and the popular press at the time.{{fact}} Gardner used these concepts as his central theological doctrine and constructed Wicca around this core. === Later developments === Wicca has developed in several directions and institutional structures from the time it was brought to wider attention by Gerald Gardner. Gardnerian_Wicca was an initiatory Mystery_religion, admission to which was at least in theory limited to those who were initiated into a pre-existing coven. The "Book_of_Shadows", the Grimoire that contained the Gardnerian rituals, was a secret that could only be obtained from a coven of proper lineage. Some Wiccans such as Raymond_Buckland, then a Gardnerian, continued to maintain this stance well into the 1970s. The practice remains in a few covens still today. Ray Buckland introduced modern Wicca to America after moving to Long Island. Buckland continued writing the Book of Shadows. Further degrees of initiation were required before members could found their own covens. Interest outstripped the ability of the mostly British-based covens to train and propagate members; the beliefs of the religion spread faster by the printed word or word of mouth than the initiatory system was prepared to handle. Other traditions appeared that gradually brought more attention and adherents to the extant Neopaganism movement.{{fact}} Some claimed roots as ancient as Gardner's version, and were organised along similar lines.{{fact}} Others were syncretistic, in that they imported aspects of Kabbalah, romanticised Celtic Pagan concepts, and Ceremonial_magic. In 1971 "Lady Sheba" published what she claimed was a version of the Gardnerian "Book of Shadows", although the authenticity of this book has never been validated. Increasing awareness of Gardner's literary sources and the actual early history of the movement made creativity seem as valuable as Gardnerian tradition. Another significant development was the creation by feminists of Dianic_Wicca, or feminist Dianic Witchcraft. This is a specifically feminist faith that discarded Gardnerian-style hierarchy as irrelevant, amongst other aspects. Many Dianic Wiccans taught that witchcraft was every woman's right and heritage to claim.{{fact}} This heritage might be best characterized by Monique Wittig words on the subject: ""But remember. Make an effort to remember. Or, failing that, invent."" This tradition was comparatively (and unusually for that time) open to solitary witches. Rituals were created for self-initiation to allow people to identify with and join the religion without first contacting an existing coven.{{fact}} This contrasts with the Gardnerian belief that only a witch of opposite gender could initiate another witch.{{fact}} The publications of Raymond Buckland illustrate these changes. During the early 1970s, in books such as "Witchcraft - Ancient and Modern" and "Witchcraft From the Inside", Buckland maintained the Gardnerian position that only initiates into a Gardnerian or other traditional coven were truly Wiccans. However, in 1974, Buckland broke with the Gardnerians and founded Seax-Wica, revealing its teachings and rituals in the book

"The Tree: The Complete Book of Saxon Witchcraft". This "tradition" made no claims to direct descent from ancient Saxons; all of its then-extant rituals were contained in that book, which allowed for self-initiation. In 1986 Buckland published "Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft", a workbook that sought to train readers in magical and ritual techniques as well as instructing them in Wiccan teachings and rituals. ==Beliefs and practices== Image:Paganavebury.jpg in England, on Beltane, 2005.]]It is commonly understood that most Wiccans worship two deities: the Goddess and the God (sometimes known as the Horned_God). Some traditions, such as the Dianic_Wiccans, mainly worship the Goddess. In those traditions, the God plays either no role, or a diminished role. Many Gardnerian_Wiccans do not claim to be Dualist. They may practice some form of Polytheism, often with particular reference to the Celtic pantheons. They may also be Animists, Pantheists, or indeed anywhere within the broad spectrum of Neopagan forms of worship. Wiccans typically celebrate eight main holidays (or Sabbats): four Cross-quarter_days called Samhain (pronounced sow-en or sow-ain), Beltane (or Beltaine), Imbolc (also called Imbolg, Oimeic, or Candlemas) and Lammas (or Lughnasadh, which is pronounced LOO-nah-sah), as well as the solstices, Litha and Yule, and equinoxes, Ostara (or Eostar or Eostre) and Mabon (see Wheel_of_the_Year). They also hold Esbats, which are rituals held at the full and new moon. The names of these holidays generally coincide with (or directly draw upon) ancient pan-Germanic and pan-Celtic holidays held around the same times.{{fact}} Ritual observations may include mixtures of those holidays as well as others celebrated at the same time in other cultures- there are several ways to celebrate the holidays. These eight holidays (or festivals in some cultures) tend to be found in more than a few European culture groups before the invasion of monotheist missionary efforts. In this respect, Wiccans have a link, albeit tenuous, with their ideological ancestors.{{fact}} Some Wiccans join groups called Covens. Others work alone and are called "solitaries". Some solitaries do, however, attend "gatherings" and other community events, but reserve their spiritual practices (Sabbats, Esbats, spell-casting, Worship, magical work, etc.) for when they are alone. Some Wiccans work with a community without being part of a coven. Many Wiccan traditions hold that the ideal number of members for a coven is thirteen.{{fact}} When covens grow beyond their ideal number of members, they often split (or "hive") into multiple covens, yet remain connected as a group. A grouping of multiple covens is known as a grove in many traditions. Wiccan weddings can be "bondings", "joinings", or "eclipses" but are most commonly called "Handfastings". Some Wiccans observe an ancient Celtic practice of a trial marriage for a year and a day, which some traditions hold should be contracted on Lammas (Lughnasadh), although this is far from universal. This practice is attested from centuries ago in the fourth and fifth volumes of the Brehon law texts, which are compilations of the opinions and judgements of the Brehon class of Druids (in this case, Irish). The texts as a whole deal with a copious amount of detail for the ancient Celtic tribes in the Isles.(O'Donovan, 2000) When someone is being initiated into a coven, it is also traditional to study with the coven for a year and a day before their actual initiation into the religion, and some Solitary Wiccans choose to study for a year and a day before dedicating themselves to the religion. A sensationalized aspect of Wicca, particularly in Gardnerian_Wicca, is that some Wiccans practice naked. Though many Wiccans do engage in rituals while Skyclad others do not. Some Wiccans wear a pure cotton robe, to symbolise bodily

purity, and a cord, to symbolise interdependence.{{fact}} Others wear normal clothes or whatever they think is appropriate. Robes and even Renaissance-Faire-type clothing are not uncommon. In typical rites, the Wiccans assemble inside a magic circle, which is marked using various means, in a ritual manner followed by a cleansing and then blessing of the space. Prayers to the God and Goddess are said, and spells are sometimes worked. Traditionally, the circle is followed by a meal.{{fact}} Before entering the circle, some Traditions fast for the day, and have a thorough wash. Many Wiccans use a special set of altar tools in their rituals; these can include a broom (besom), Cauldron, Chalice (goblet), Wand, Book_of_Shadows, Altar_cloth, Athame (used in rituals to channel energy; it can be pronounced as AH-thom-AY, a-THAY-may, et cetera.), Boline (or a knife for cutting things in the physical world), Candles, and/or Incense. Representations of the God/Goddess are often also used, which may be direct, representative, or abstract. The tools themselves are just that — tools, and have no innate powers of their own, though they are usually dedicated or charged with a particular purpose, and used only in that context. It is considered rude to touch another's tools without permission. There are different thoughts in Wicca regarding the Elements. Some hold to the ancient Greek conception of the Classical_elements (air, fire, water, earth), while others recognize "five" elements: earth, air, water, fire, and spirit (Akasha). It has been claimed that the points of the frequently worn Pentagram symbol, the five pointed star, symbolise five elements.{{fact}} The Pentagram is the Symbol most commonly associated with Wicca in modern times. It is often circumscribed — depicted within a circle — and is commonly labeled a 'Pentacle' in this form, though that name is disputed http://home.att.net/~carol_douglas/betapent.html. The pentagram is most often shown its point facing upward in specifically Wiccan contexts. A common belief held by Alexandrian Wiccans is that the upper, most important point represents spirit, and the four remaining points symbolise earth, air, fire, and water.{{fact}} This concept, as applied to pentagonous symbols, has slowly worked itself into other traditions, such as Solitary Wicca and Seax-Wica.{{fact}} A notable exception is Gardnerian Wicca, whose adherents will usually deny that the points of the pentagram actually represent anything at all.{{fact}} Another view, though less common, on the symbolism of the pentagram is that upright it is a charm which protects its wearer through passive energies, such as good will or pleasing emotions, and that if it is inverted, it will protect its wearer in the form of aggressive energies, such as curses or angry emotions (the contrast between the upright "good" pentagram and inverted "bad" pentagram seems to have been invented by Eliphas_Levi). <http://www.sociumas.lt/Eng/Nr15/simboliai.asp> In either case, these are the elements of nature that symbolize for Wiccans the different places, emotions, objects, and natural energies and forces. For instance, Crystals and stones are objects of the element earth, and Seashells are objects associated with the element of water. Each of the four cardinal elements (Air, Fire, Water and Earth) are commonly assigned a direction and a color. The following list is not true for all traditions or branches of Wicca: *Air: east, yellow *Fire: south, red *Water: west, blue *Earth: north, green These correspondences may vary between traditions. It is common in the southern hemisphere, for example, to associate the element fire with north (the direction of the equator) and earth with south (the direction of the nearest polar area). Some Wiccan groups also modify the religious calendar to reflect local seasonal changes; for instance, in Australia Samhain might be

celebrated on April 30th, and Beltane on October 31st to reflect the southern hemisphere's autumn and spring seasons. ==Morality== Wiccan morality can be summarised in the form of a text that is commonly titled The Wiccan_Rede. The core maxim of that text states "An it harm none, do what thou wilt." ("An" is an archaic word meaning "if".) Many Wiccans promote the Law of Threefold Return. This is the idea that anything that one does will be returned to them threefold. In other words, good deeds are magnified in like forms back to the doer, and so are ill deeds. It can also be interpreted to mean that your deeds come back to you emotionally, spiritually, and physically, not three times in strength. Gerina_Dunwich, an American author whose books (notably, "Wicca_Craft") were instrumental in the increase in popularity of Wicca in the late 1980s and 1990s, disagrees with the Wiccan concept of threefold return on the grounds that it is inconsistent with more than one law of physics. Pointing out that the origin of the Law of Threefold Return is traceable to Raymond Buckland in the 20th century, Dunwich is of the opinion that, "There is little backing to support it as anything other than a psychological law."{{fact}} Her own personal belief, which differs from the usual interpretation of the Threefold Law, is that whatever we do on a physical, mental, or spiritual level will sooner or later affect us, in either a positive or negative way, on all three levels of being.{{fact}} A few Wiccans also follow, or at least consider, a set of 161 laws often referred to as Lady_Sheba's_Laws. A common criticism of these rules is that they represent outdated concepts and produce and/or counterproductive results in Wiccan contexts. Many Wiccans also seek to cultivate the Eight Wiccan Virtues as a guideline for their deeds. These may have been derived from earlier Virtue_ethics, but were first collected and synthesised by Doreen_Valiente in the "Charge_of_the_Goddess".{{fact}} They are Mirth, Reverence, Honour, Humility, Strength, Beauty, Power, and Compassion. They are in paired opposites, which are perceived as balancing each other. This reflects the Dualism that is commonly found in traditional Wiccan concepts of the divine. For a summary of Wiccan views on homosexuality, see Neopagan_views_of_homosexuality. A recurrent belief amongst Wiccans is that no magic should be performed on any other person without that person's direct permission (excepting pets, which obviously cannot give explicit permission for such an act). This may stem from the Rede's declaration of "An it harm none, do what thou wilt", in that a person may not wish to have a spell cast upon them, and doing so without first obtaining permission interferes with their free will, which falls under the meaning of the word 'harm' as applied in the Rede. == Discrimination and persecution of Wiccans == {{Religious persecution}} Since Wicca was first publically revealed in 1954, it has not had a long history of persecution. However, some Wiccans claim a historical link between Wicca and earlier religious and/or spiritual traditions, and thus may claim that Witch_trials are persecutions against their faith.{{fact}} There is no independently verifiable evidence for any sort of actual traditional lineage for Wicca that is older than the early 20th century C.E.. In light of that, individual and group claims of persecution that deal with events older than the 20th century are treated with a large amount of skepticism by both Wiccans and non-Wiccans. In modern times, Wicca have been criticized because people associate that religion and its adherents with evil Witchcraft and Satanism, especially during times of Satanic_Ritual_Abuse Hysteria.{{fact}} The Hebrew_Bible (Leviticus 20:27 "A man or a woman who is a medium or a wizard shall be put to death; they shall be stoned with stones, their blood

shall be upon them." and Exodus 22:18 "You shall not permit a sorceress to live." may incite Christians to be less than sympathetic toward neo-Pagans in general. Wiccans also experience difficulties in administering and receiving prison ministry. ===United States=== In 1985, as a result of *Dettmer v Landon* (617 F Supp 592), the District Court of Virginia ruled that Wicca is a legally recognised religion and is afforded all the benefits accorded to it by law. This was affirmed a year later by Judge J. Butzner of the Federal Appeals Court fourth circuit (799 F 2d 929, 1986). However, Wiccans can still become the object of stigma in America, leading to members concealing their faith out of fear of the reaction of others. Category:Religious_persecution ==Wiccan traditions== There are many traditions, sub-traditions, and lineages of Wicca; among these is "'Solitary Wicca'", which is Wicca practiced by oneself and often in secret. Other Wiccan traditions include: * Alexandrian_Wicca * Blue_Star_Wicca * Celtic_Wicca * Correllian_Nativist_Church (Correllian Wicca) * Dianic or Feminist Wicca * Eclectic_Wicca * Faery_Wicca * Feri_Tradition * Gardnerian_Wicca * Kemetic_Wicca * Kingstone_Wicca * Mohsian * Myjestic_Order * Odyssean_Wicca * Protean_Tradition * Seax-Wica * Stregheria * Universal_Eclectic_Wicca Many Wiccans keep a Book_of_Shadows as a Journal or Diary which contains thoughts, Spells, rituals, and ideas. These can be electronic files (as from a Word_processor), Notebooks, or journals purchased at specialty Stores (which usually also carry Incense, Tarot cards, Candles, and other sundries). Some Wiccans hold their Book of Shadows as repositories strictly for spells and keep a separate book, sometimes called the "Book of Mirrors" to contain their thoughts, feelings and experiences concerning the practice of their faith (from "Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner", Llewellyn's Practical Magic Series, by Scott Cunningham; pg. 79-80). A generally accepted and informative book describing the various "paths" within the American pagan community is Margot_Adler's "Drawing_Down_the_Moon:_Witches,_Druids,_Goddess-Worshippers,_and_Other_Pagans_in_America_Today". ==See also== * Fluffy_bunny * Gerina_Dunwich * Magick * New_Age * Oh_My_Gods! * Sex_magic * Witch_trial ==Notes== # {{note|warlock}} Old English "wæŕ-loȝa" weak masculine (= "traitor, enemy, devil, etc.") = Old Saxon "wâr-logo" weak masculine (= "deceiver") (once, *Heliand* 3817, in plural "wârlogon" applied to the Pharisees). The first element is probably Old English "wæŕ" strong feminine (= "covenant") = Old High German "wâra" (= "truth"), Old Norse "várar" strong feminine plural ("solemn promise, vow") (cf. "Væringi" = "confederate, Varangian"); cf. Old Slavic. "věra" ("faith"). This is a derivative from the adjective represented by Old English "wæŕ" ("true") (once, Genesis 681; ? a. Old Saxon.) = Old Saxon, Old High German "wâr" ("true"): - Old Teutonic "*wæro-": - Pre-Teutonic "*wāro-" = Latin "vērus". The second element (an agent-n. related to Old English "léoȝan" ("to lie belie, deny") occurs also in the similar comps. "áp-loȝa", "tréow-loȝa" (Old Saxon "treulogo"), "wed-loȝa" (Middle English "wedlowe"), ("an oath-breaker"), etc. -- Oxford English Dictionary, (online) 2nd Edition (1989) ==References== # Bosworth, Joseph & T. Northcote Toller. "An Anglo-Saxon dictionary, based on the manuscript collections of the late Joseph Bosworth; edited and enlarged by T. Northcote Toller." Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 (reprint of 1898 edition). ISBN 0198631014 # O'Donovan, J., O'Curry, E., Hancock, W. N., O'Mahony, T., Richey, A. G., Hennessy, W. M., & Atkinson, R. (eds.) "Ancient laws of Ireland, published under direction of the Commissioners for Publishing the Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland." Buffalo, New

York: W.S. Hein, 2000. (Originally published: Dublin: A. Thom, 1865-1901) ISBN 1575885727 (alternatively known as "Hiberniae leges et institutiones antiquae")

==External links==

===Online communities===

- *Witches' Voice
- *The Cauldron: A Pagan Forum
- *Mystic Wicks Online Pagan Community and Pagan Forums
- *Wicca: For the Rest of Us
- *UK Pagan
- *Amber and Jet British Traditional Wicca e-list

===Organizations===

- *Pagan Federation, The - the foremost Pagan organization in the United Kingdom
- **Pagan Federation / Fédération Païenne Canada
- *Covenant of the Goddess - a leading Pagan organization in the United States

===Miscellaneous===

- *Wicca for Beginners - A site created by the Dragon Tradition of Wicca.
- *Goddess Knotwork Wicca link list
- *Wicca Pages - Introduction to Wicca and Paganism aimed at non-Pagans
- *Wicca - ReligionFacts.com article on Wicca
- *Wicca, the Religion - from ReligiousTolerance.org
- *About Pagan/Wiccan Religion - Articles and resources on Wicca and other Pagan religions.
- *Wiccans and Christians: Some Mutual Challenges from Jesus.com.au
- *Witchipedia Category:Paganism Category:Neopaganism Af:Wicca Ar:ويكا Ca:Wicca Cs:Wicca Da:Wicca De:Wicca Es:Wicca Eo:Viĉo Fa:ويکا Fr:Wicca It:Wicca He:ויקהא נל:Wicca No:Wicca Pl:Wicca Pt:Wicca Ro:Wicca Ru:Викка Fi:Wicca Sv:Wicca

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gwydion_Pendderwen

47 captures

15 Dec 2005 - 13 Nov 2025

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About this capture

Gwydion_Pendderwen was born Thomas deLong in California in 1946 and died in a car accident in 1982. As a child he became craft-son to Victor_Anderson and studied his Feri_Tradition. A Songwriter and Musician, he released two albums entitled "Songs for the Old Religion" (1975) and "The Faery Shaman" (1982) that were received with acclaim by the pagan community. Gwydion served for a time as a court Bard to the West Kingdom in the Society_for_Creative_Anachronism. After being recognized for his music at a celebration in Wales in 1976, he returned to California, quit his job, and purchased a plot of the Greenfield Ranch in Mendocino County. Naming his parcel Annwn after the Welsh underworld, he later gift-deeded the property to the Church_of_All_Worlds with which he had long been involved.

==External links==

- *Gwydion's Life {{musician-stub}}

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celt>

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...

Celt

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

This article is about the European people. For the tool, see celt (tool).

A Celtic cross.

Enlarge

A Celtic cross.

The term Celts (pronounced "kelts")^[1] refers to any of a number of ancient peoples in Europe using the Celtic languages, which form a branch of Indo-European languages, as well as others whose language is unknown but where associated cultural traits such as Celtic art are found in archaeological evidence. Historical theories were developed that these factors were indicative of a common origin, but later theories of culture spreading to differing indigenous peoples have recently been supported by genetic studies.

Though the spread of the Roman empire led to continental Celts adopting Roman culture, the development of Celtic Christianity in Ireland and Britain brought an early medieval renaissance of Celtic art between 400 and 1200. Antiquarian interest from the 17th century led to the term Celt being developed, and rising nationalism brought Celtic revivals from the 19th century in areas where the use of Celtic languages had continued.

Today, "Celtic" is often used to describe the languages and respective cultures of Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Cornwall, the Isle of Man and the French region of Brittany, but correctly corresponds to the Celtic language family in which are still spoken Scottish, Irish and Manx (Gaelic languages) and Welsh, Breton and Cornish (Brythonic languages).

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Development of the term "Celt"

The first literary reference to the Celtic people, as *keltoi* or hidden people, is by the Greek historian Hecataeus in 517 BC. According to Greek mythology, Celtus was the son of Heracles and Celtine, the daughter of Britannus. Celtus became the primogenitor of Celts (Ref.: Parth. 30.1-2)[2]. In Latin *Celta*, in turn from Herodotus' word for the Gauls, *Keltoi*. The Romans used *Celtae* to refer to continental Gauls, but apparently not to insular Celts, which were divided into Goidhels and Britons, and possibly other peoples. This is likely due to the possibility that, at those times, the term "*Celta/Keltos*" was tied to those cultures or people descendant from the Central Europe Celts, while no ties were known to the insular people (especially the Gaels whose language was extremely different from that of Brythonic Celts).

The English word is modern, attested from 1707.[3] In the late 17th century the work of scholars such as Edward Lhuyd brought academic attention, then in the 18th century the interest in "primitivism" which led to the idea of the "noble savage" brought a wave of enthusiasm for all things Celtic and Druidic. The "Irish revival" came after the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 as a conscious attempt to demonstrate an Irish national identity, and with its counterpart in other countries subsequently became the "Celtic revival".

Nowadays "Celt" is usually pronounced as /kɛlt/ and "Celtic" as /ˈkɛltɪk/ (in IPA) when referring to the ethnic group and its languages, while the pronunciation /ˈsɛltɪk/ remains in use mainly for certain sports teams (eg. the NBA team, Boston Celtics, and the SPL side, Celtic F.C., in Glasgow). (The pronunciation with /s/ reflects historical palatalization of the letter 'C' when it occurs before 'I' or 'E' in words of Latin origin; in the Classical era Latin 'C' was always pronounced as /k/. The modern pronunciation with /k/ is a reversion to the original, whereas the pronunciation with /s/ has not been reverted.) The word spelt as "Celtic" is (arguably) English, as the Latin was "Celticus" or "Celticum", the Welsh is "Celtaidd", and the Irish Gaelic is "Ceilteach". By this argument, a pronunciation with /s/ should therefore be acceptable.

The term "Celt" or "Celtic" can be used in several senses: it can denote a group of peoples who speak or descend from speakers of Celtic languages; or the people of prehistoric and early historic Europe who share common cultural traits which are thought to have originated in the Hallstatt and La Tène cultures. In contemporary terms, there are typically six nations defined as 'Celtic Nations'. To be defined as a Celtic nation, that nation must have ownership of a Celtic language. The first six are usually defined as Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, and Brittany. The additional nations of Galicia and Asturias in Spain are sometimes considered to be modern Celtic nations based on the survival of Celtic traditions similar to the traditions

of other Celtic nations, however, the Celtic language has not survived in either. England retains many Celtic influences but is not Celtic, but the languages of Pre-Anglo Celtic peoples influences dialects of some of its more rural regions, particularly those bordering Scotland and Wales, the best known of which are Cumbric which was spoken from Strathclyde to Derbyshire as recently as the 11th century, and the language centred on Devon — both languages are under-going a modern revival. Other areas of Europe are associated with being Celtic as well, including France, which traces its roots to the Gauls. In Scotland, the Gaelic language traces at least some of its roots to migration and settlement by the Irish Dalriada/Scotti. Due to the settlement of English speaking Angles in the lowlands, which — among other things — drove out the Gaelic language, Scots Gaelic survives only in the country's northern and western fringes in the areas where Scotti tribes settled and dominated over the indigenous Brythonic culture.

The use of the word 'Celtic' as a valid umbrella term for the pre-Roman peoples of Britain has been challenged by a number of writers — including Simon James, formerly of the British Museum. His book *The Atlantic Celts - Ancient People Or Modern Invention?* makes the point that the Romans never used the term 'Celtic' in reference to the peoples of the Atlantic archipelago, i.e. the British Isles, and points out that the modern term "Celt" was coined as a useful umbrella term in the early 18th century to distinguish the non-English inhabitants of the archipelago when England united with Scotland in 1707 to create the United Kingdom. Nationalists in Scotland, Ireland and Wales looked for a way to differentiate themselves from England and assert their right to independence. James then argues that, despite the obvious linguistic connections, archaeology does not suggest a united Celtic culture and that the term is misleading, no more (or less) meaningful than 'Western European' would be today.

This is somewhat misleading, however, since the Romans and Greeks did describe the Atlantic and continental Celts as being related to each other, having military alliances (and rivalries) with one another, sharing similar languages and traditions, as well as having a common religion and priest class. Additionally, archeological evidence shows quite clearly that the Atlantic and continental Celts were engaged in commerce with each other via regular trade routes. No one on either side of the debate argues that Celtic people have ever been a single homogenous political or social unit, but to argue that the Atlantic Celts were not Celts at all simply because hostile Romans never described them as such betrays a rather unscholarly bias.

Miranda Green, author of *Celtic Goddesses*, describes archaeologists as finding "a certain homogeneity" in the traditions in the area of Celtic habitation including Britain and Ireland — an assertion backed up by recent genetic evidence which shows the populations of Ireland and Wales to be virtually indistinguishable from each other. She sees the inhabitants of the British Isles and Ireland as having become thoroughly Celticized by the time of the Roman arrival, mainly through spread of culture rather than a movement of people.

In his book *Iron Age Britain*, Barry Cunliffe concludes that "...there is no evidence in the

British Isles to suggest that a population group of any size migrated from the continent in the first millennium BC...". Cunliffe tempers his remarks by pointing out that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, but modern archaeological thought tends to disparage the idea of large population movements without facts to back them up, a caution which appears to be vindicated by genetic studies. In other words, Celtic culture in the Atlantic Archipelago and continental Europe most probably emerged through the peaceful convergence of local tribal cultures bound together by networks of trade and kinship — not by war and conquest. This type of peaceful convergence and cooperation is actually relatively common among tribal peoples; other well known examples of the phenomenon include the Six Nations of the Iroquois League and the Nuer of East Africa. The ancient Celts are thus best depicted as a loose and highly diverse collection of indigenous tribal societies bound together by trade, a common druidic religion, and similar political institutions — but each having its own local language and traditions.

Michael Morse in the conclusion of his book *How the Celts came to Britain* concedes that the concepts of a broad Celtic linguistic area and recognizably Celtic art have their uses, but argues that the term implies a greater unity than existed. Despite such problems he suggests that the term Celt is probably too deep-rooted to be replaced and — what is more important — it has the definition that we choose to give it. The problem is that the wider public reads into the term quite anachronistic concepts of ethnic unity that no one on either side in the academic debate holds.

[edit]

Population genetics

With the information gathered recently by population geneticists, it is becoming increasingly clear that the old idea of large-scale replacement by newer invaders is often a misleading concept. The Celtic ethnicity debate took off at a particularly early stage in population genetic studies.

In his book, "Neanderthal", the archaeologist, Douglas Palmer, refers to genetic research conducted across Europe, and then states that the original modern genetic group in Europe arrived between 9,000 and 5,000 years ago with the spread of farming, displacing the earlier hunter gatherer populations. Such displacement occurred by population explosion, since farming is capable of supporting up to a 60 times greater population than the hunter-gatherer lifestyle in the same area;

"None of Europe's subsequent historic upheavals - even catastrophic wars and famines - has seriously dented the old pattern set by the influx of farmers. The Goths, Huns and Romans have come and gone without any significant impact on the ancient gene map of Europe". -Douglas Palmer

It seems futile to suggest that people who were once part of a wider Celtic cultural group, cannot be considered Celtic, in the same way that it would seem futile to suggest that their direct descendants in places like Devon or Cumbrian cannot be considered English in modern times. Perhaps our perception of race and culture need to change, as European population genetic history seems to indicate that the latter is independent of

the former.

[edit]

Origins and geographical distribution

The green area suggests a possible extent of (proto-)Celtic influence around 1000 BC. The orange area shows the region of birth of the La Tène style. The red area indicates an idea of the possible region of Celtic influence around 400 BC.

Enlarge

The green area suggests a possible extent of (proto-)Celtic influence around 1000 BC. The orange area shows the region of birth of the La Tène style. The red area indicates an idea of the possible region of Celtic influence around 400 BC.

The Celtic language family is a branch of the larger Indo-European family, which leads some scholars to a hypothesis that the original speakers of the Celtic proto-language may have arisen in the Pontic-Caspian steppes (see Kurgan). However, as the Celts enter history from around 600 BC, they are already split into several language groups, and spread over much of Central Europe, the Iberian peninsula, Ireland and Britain, and studies now suggest that some of the Celtic peoples - including the ancestors of all the modern Celtic nations - had a largely pre-Celtic genetic ancestry, shared with the Basque people and possibly going back to the Palaeolithic. [4].

Some scholars think that the Urnfield culture represents an origin for the Celts as a distinct cultural branch of the Indo-European family. This culture was preeminent in central Europe during the late Bronze Age, from ca. 1200 BC until 700 BC, itself following the Unetice and Tumulus cultures. The Urnfield period saw a dramatic increase in population in the region, probably due to innovations in technology and agricultural practices. The spread of iron-working led to the development of the Hallstatt culture directly from the Urnfield (c. 700 to 500 BC). Proto-Celtic, the latest common ancestor of all known Celtic languages, is thought to have been spoken at the time of the late Urnfield or early Hallstatt cultures, in the early 1st millennium BC.

The spread of the Celtic languages to Britain and to Iberia would have occurred during the first half of the 1st millennium, the earliest chariot burials in Britain dating to ca. 500 BC. Over the centuries they developed into the separate Celtiberian, Goidelic and Brythonic languages. Whether Goidelic and Brythonic are descended from a common Insular-Celtic language, or if they reflect two separate waves of migration is disputed. The La Tène culture, in any case, can be associated with the Gauls, but it is entirely too late for a candidate for the Proto-Celtic culture.

The Hallstatt culture was succeeded by the La Tène culture, and during the final stages of the Iron Age gradually transformed into the explicitly Celtic culture of early historical times. The La Tène culture was distributed around the upper reaches of the Danube, Switzerland, Austria, southern and central Germany, eastern France, Bohemia and Moravia, and parts of Hungary. The technologies, decorative practices and metal-working styles of the La Tène were to be very influential on the continental Celts. The La Tène style was highly derivative from the Greek, Etruscan and Scythian

decorative styles with whom the La Tène settlers frequently traded.

It is not known whether the Picts of Scotland were Celts or the remnant of an earlier population of the British Isles who had been pushed to the margin by Celtic invasions, or indeed whether they spoke a Brythonic language. The lack of any evidence to support the Celtic Invasion model, however, leads many scholars to favor the former model. In historical times western Scotland was colonised by Celtic Scotti from Ireland, who subsequently formed a political union with the Picts under Kenneth mac Alpin who had both Scots and Pictish ancestry.

Additional forays into Greece and central Italy during the historical period did not result in settlement, though the same movement that brought Celtic invaders to Greece pushed on through to Anatolia, where they settled as the Galatians.

As there is no archaeological evidence for large scale invasions in some of the other areas, one current school of thought holds that Celtic language and culture spread to those areas by contact rather than invasion. However, the Celtic invasions of Italy, Greece, and western Anatolia are well documented in Greek and Latin history. Examine the Map of Celtic Lands[5]for more information.

Stonehenge and the other megalithic monuments long predate the Iron Age Celtic culture, but Genetic evidence indicates that the Celtic populations of the Atlantic Archipelago have been relatively stable for at least 6,000 years, in which case the modern Celts would be the direct descendants of their builders. There is no evidence that they used these sites as areas of worship from the Iron Age on, however, and indeed most evidence suggest that the Druidic Celtic religion(s) preferred to use groves of Oak trees as places of worship. The connection between these monuments and the Celts largely stems from 18th century romantics such as William Stukely.

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Celts in Ireland and Britain

The indigenous populations of Britain and Ireland today are primarily descended from the ancient peoples that have always inhabited these lands. As to their culture, little is known but remnants remain primarily in the naming of certain geographical features, such as the rivers Clyde, Tamar, Thames and Tyne. By the Roman period most of the inhabitants of the isles of Ireland and Great Britain (the ancient Britons) were speaking Goidelic or Brythonic languages, close counterparts to Gaulish languages spoken on the European mainland. Historians explained this as the result of successive invasions from the European continent by diverse Celtic-speaking peoples over the course of several centuries. In 1946 the Celtic scholar T. F. O'Rahilly published his extremely influential model of the early history of Ireland which postulated four separate waves of Celtic invaders. What languages were spoken by the peoples of the British Isles before the arrival of the Celts is unknown.

Celtic dagger found in Britain.

Enlarge

Celtic dagger found in Britain.

Later research indicated that the language and culture had developed gradually and continuously, and in Ireland no archaeological evidence was found for large intrusive groups of Celtic immigrants, suggesting to historians such as Colin Renfrew that the native Late Bronze Age inhabitants gradually absorbed influences to create "Celtic" culture. The very few continental La Tène culture style objects which had been found in Ireland could have been imports, or the possessions of a few rich immigrants. Julius Caesar had written of people in Britain who came from Belgium (the Belgae), but archaeological evidence which was interpreted in the 1930s as confirming this was contradicted by later interpretations and it was suggested that there might have been only a handful of élite Belgae in Britain. In the 1970s this model was popularised by Colin Burgess in his book *The Age of Stonehenge* which theorised that Celtic culture in Great Britain "emerged" rather than resulted from invasion and that the Celts were not invading aliens, but the descendants of the people of Stonehenge.

More recently a number of genetic studies have supported this model of culture being absorbed by native populations. The study by Cristian Capelli, David Goldstein and others at University College, London showed that genes associated with Gaelic names in Ireland and Scotland are also common in Wales, Cornwall and most parts England, and are similar to the genes of the Basque people, who speak a non-Indo-European language. This similarity supported earlier findings in suggesting a largely pre-Celtic genetic ancestry, possibly going back to the Paleolithic. They suggest that 'Celtic' culture and the Celtic language were imported to Britain by cultural contact not mass invasions, either by Indo-Europeans bringing farming or by Celts in 600 BC. Recent studies have proven that, contrary to long-standing beliefs, the Teuton tribes did not wipe out the Romano-British of England but rather, over the course of six centuries, conquered the native Brythonic people of what is now England and south east Scotland and imposed their culture and language upon them, in a manner similar to the Irish spread over the west of Scotland.

[edit]

Roman influence

At the dawn of history in Europe, the Celts in present-day France were known as Gauls. Their descendants were described by Julius Caesar in his *Gallic Wars*. There was also an early Celtic presence in northern Italy. Other Celtic tribes invaded Italy, establishing there a city they called Mediolanum (modern Milan) and sacking Rome itself in 390 BC following the Battle of the Allia. A century later the defeat of the combined Samnite, Celtic and Etruscan alliance by the Romans in the Third Samnite War sounded the end of the Celtic domination in Europe, but it was not until 192 BC that the Roman armies conquered the last remaining independent Celtic kingdoms in Italy.

Under Caesar the Romans conquered Celtic Gaul, and from Claudius onward the Roman empire absorbed parts of the Celtic British Isles. Roman local government of these regions closely mirrored pre-Roman 'tribal' boundaries, and archaeological finds

suggest native involvement in local government. Latin was the official language of these regions after the conquests.

The native peoples under Roman rule became Romanized and keen to adopt Roman ways. Celtic art had already incorporated classical influences, and surviving Gallo-Roman pieces interpret classical subjects or keep faith with old traditions despite a Roman overlay.

[edit]

Examples of Romanization

This section needs to be cleaned up to conform to a higher standard of quality.

This section has been tagged since December 2005.

See Help:Editing and Category:Wikipedia help for help, or this article's talk page.

Examples of Romanization include the slow disappearance of druids. This was because under Roman rule the druids lost power. Before Roman rule druids were important and made almost all decisions. When Rome came to rule druids no longer made these decisions.

The use of stone by Celts. Before Rome they almost only used mud and sticks. When they started to interact with Rome more they started to use stone.

Appearance of Roman-Celt hybrid gods. With more interaction with Rome Celtic gods started to have names such as Mars.

[edit]

Celtic Christianity

While the regions under Roman rule adopted Christianity along with the rest of the Roman empire, unconquered areas of Scotland and Ireland moved from Celtic polytheism to Celtic Christianity which was a major source of missionary work in other parts of Britain and central Europe. This brought the early medieval renaissance of Celtic art between 400 and 1200, developing many of the styles now thought of as typically Celtic, and found through much of Ireland and Britain, including the north-east and far north of Scotland, Orkney and Shetland Islands. This was brought to an end by Roman Catholic and Norman influence, though the Celtic languages and some minor influences of the art continued.

[edit]

Celts pushed west by Germanic migration

Celts were pushed westwards by successive waves of Germanic invaders, perhaps themselves at times pressured by Huns and Scythians or simply population pressures in their homeland of Scandinavia and Northern Germany. With the fall of the Roman Empire the Celts of Gaul, Iberia and Britannia were "conquered" by tribes speaking Germanic languages.

Elsewhere, the Celtic populations were assimilated by others, leaving behind them only a legend and a number of place names such as Bohemia, after the Boii tribe which once lived there, or the Kingdom of Belgium, after the Belgae, a Celtic tribe of Northern Gaul and south-eastern England. Their mythology has been absorbed into the folklore of half a dozen other countries. For instance, the famous Medieval English Arthurian tale of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is almost certainly partially derived from the medieval Irish text *Fled Bricrend* (The Feast of Bricriu).

Argument rages in the academic world as to whether the Celts in England were mostly wiped out/pushed west as the lack of evidence for influence of the Celts on Anglo-Saxon society suggests, or whether the Teuton migration consisted merely of the social elite and that the genocide was cultural rather than physical due to such relatively few numbers of Anglo-Saxons mixing with the far larger native population, enabled to do so due to the civil strife in Britain after the Roman withdrawal and the unity of the incoming invaders. Recent DNA studies have confirmed that the population of England maintains a predominately ancient British element, equal in most parts to Cornwall and Wales. The general indigenous population of Yorkshire, East Anglia and the Orkney and Shetland Islands are those populations with the least traces of ancient British continuation [6]. Ironically, it is Viking genetic influence and not Anglo-Saxon which has had a more profound impact on British bloodlines.

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Celtic social system and arts

The pre-Christian Celts had a well-organized social structure, based on class and kinship, with the religion we call Celtic polytheism. Elected Kings led the tribes, and society was divided into three groups: a warrior aristocracy, an intellectual class including druids, poets, and jurists, and everyone else. Women participated both in warfare and in kingship, and all the offices of high and low kings were filled by election under the system of tanistry, both factors which would confuse Norman writers expecting the feudal principle of primogeniture where the succession goes to the first born son. Little is known of family structure, but Athenaeus in his *Deipnosophists*, 13.603, claims that "the Celts, in spite of the fact that their women are very beautiful, prefer boys as sexual partners. There are some of them who will regularly go to bed – on those animal skins of theirs – with a pair of lovers," implying with a woman and a boy.

Celtic societies were organised around warfare, but this seems to have been more of a sport focussed on raids and hunting rather than organised territorial conquest, drawing obvious comparisons to warfare among Native Americans prior to European contact. This was the age of Hillforts and duns, but there was apparently no urbanization.

There is strong archeological evidence to suggest that the pre-Roman Celtic nations were tied into a network of overland trade routes that spanned Eurasia from Ireland to China. Celtic traders were also in contact with the Phoenicians, gold works made in

Pre-Roman Ireland have been unearthed in archeological digs in Palestine, and trade routes between the Celtic nations and Palestine date back to at least 1600 BC.

Local trade was largely in the form of barter, but as with most tribal societies they probably had a reciprocal economy in which goods and other services are not exchanged, but are given on the basis of mutual relationships and the obligations of kinship. Though they had a written language, the Ogham script, it was only used for ceremonial purposes and they produced little in the way of literary output. Instead, Celtic peoples preferred the oral Bardic tradition. The oldest recorded rhyming poetry in the world is of Irish origin and is a transcription of a much older epic poem, leading some scholars to claim that the Celts invented Rhyme. They were highly skilled in visual arts and Celtic art produced a great deal of intricate and beautiful metalwork, examples of which have been preserved by their distinctive burial rites.

In some regards the Atlantic Celts were conservative, for example they still used chariots in combat long after they had been reduced to ceremonial roles by the Greeks and Romans, though when faced with the Romans, and in the Atlantic islands their chariot tactics defeated the invasion attempted by Julius Caesar.

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Celtic Religious Patterns

Although Celtic gods varied from region to region and tribe to tribe, the Celtic religion had some patterns. For example like Mediterranean cultures most early Celts worshipped in sacred groves. This was once postulated to have occurred because of Celts trading with Mediterranean cultures; however, evidence from Hallstatt era finds show that the earliest Celts practiced this before such trade took place. More reasonably, it is a byproduct of most primitive religion to worship in such a way. However, La Tene Celts also built temples of varying size and shape, though they still usually maintained sacred trees, or votive pools. Worship was, in this way, deferred to temples, when they were available. Numerous temples were converted by the Romans, and with little difficulty; the design was rather similar to Roman temples, as they were both highly influenced by the Greeks, architecturally speaking.

Their druids' positions vary; a druid is not always a priest. Druids are any members of a Celtic society who had what we would view today as a college education. The most educated druids were usually doctors, priests, and heralds, as these occupations required the most memorization and skill for their practices. Priests from this class were in charge of a great deal of religious festivals, as well as organizing the calendar; a daunting task as the Celtic calendar is incredibly accurate, but required manual correction about every 40 years, meaning lengthy mathematic discourse.

Druids also carried out sacrifices of crops, animals, and during specific festivals, humans. In a Celtic society, people were not executed for crimes, except during these festivals. Such executions varied, depending on what god the execution was dedicated to. Among the most famous is the human sacrifices practiced in the course of Esus

worship. Essus was, more or less, a benevolent law god to many Celts, particularly Gauls. However, Essus worship also intoned a sense of merciless behavior toward repeated criminals, rapists, traitors, and other societal dregs. The offender, if found guilty, would be taken to the temple of Essus, where an oak would be growing through an opening in the temple roof. His stomach would be cut open, and he would be hung from an oak branch.

The Celts' gods were often named after natural things. For example the source of rivers would often have their own goddesses, though rarely many gods. Another theme with Celt gods were triple deities; not only goddesses, but numerous gods. For example the Mothers of Britain, or Cromm Cruach's slovenly, deific, and humanistic forms. The main deities of Celtic religion, contrary to much misconception, were usually male. The world in some remaining myths is often depicted as having been forged by a god with a hammer, such as Dagda or Sucellos, who then poured all life from a magic cauldron or cup; a source of pre-Christian 'Holy Grail' myths in Celtic societies.

While deities varied, several constant deities or demigods existed over a wide area. A great example is Lugos, a heroic sun god from Gaul and the southern, Gallic parts of Britain. He is also known as Lugh (in Ireland), Llew (in non-Gallic Britain), and Lug (among Celtiberians, who were not culturally true Celts). Early depictions of him exist as early as the Hallstatt era, suggesting him as one of the longest existing gods of Celtic religion. Similar is the horse and fertility goddess, Epona, who was also worshipped by the Romans when they came to rule Gaul. She also seems to have existed from the early era. Finally, there is Sucellos, who is argued by some to have been the 'creator of the universe' in some Celtic religions. He is party to Dagda of Ireland, and was worshipped over an enormous area, including by non-Celtic peoples such as the Lusitani. He was the patron god of the Ordovices tribe of Britain, and was built up by the Arverni and their allies to replace the druidic god Cernunnos, as the Gallic druids were allies of their enemies in the rule for Gaul; the Aedui.

Other religious practices also existed; Celts seem to have universally removed body hair. Some postulate this as religious, but was more realistically part of the Celtic propensity for cleanliness. Body hair kept dirt close to the body, and Celts were an extremely cleanly people, so this was unacceptable. However, Celts also took heads from dead enemies. This was definitely a religious practice in origin. However, even post-Christian Gaels continued this practice into the middle ages; some Irish even took to scalping the heads that they took, so they could braid the scalp through rings on their weapons. The religious connotations by that point were slim, but it does imply that taking heads had incredible cultural importance to have persisted so long after the religious background had been removed. To our understanding, Celts believed the soul resided in the head, and that capturing a head meant that one captured the soul of an opponent, and that when a Celt died, the dead whom he had collected would serve him as slaves for eternity.

[edit]

Celts as head-hunters

"Amongst the Celts the human head was venerated above all else, since the head was to the Celt the soul, centre of the emotions as well as of life itself, a symbol of divinity and of the powers of the other-world." - Paul Jacobsthal, Early Celtic Art.

The Celtic cult of the severed head is documented not only in the many sculptured representations of severed heads in La Tene carvings, but in the surviving Celtic mythology, which is full of stories of the severed heads of heroes and the saints who carry their decapitated heads, right down to Sir Gawain and the Green Knight who picks up his own severed head after Gawain has struck it off, just as St. Denis carried his head to the top of Montmartre. Separated from the mundane body, although still alive, the animated head acquires the ability to see into the mythic realm.

Diodorus Siculus, in his 1st century History had this to say about Celtic head-hunting: "They cut off the heads of enemies slain in battle and attach them to the necks of their horses. The blood-stained spoils they hand over to their attendants and carry off as booty, while striking up a paean and singing a song of victory; and they nail up these first fruits upon their houses, just as do those who lay low wild animals in certain kinds of hunting. They embalm in cedar oil the heads of the most distinguished enemies, and preserve them carefully in a chest, and display them with pride to strangers, saying that for this head one of their ancestors, or his father, or the man himself, refused the offer of a large sum of money. They say that some of them boast that they refused the weight of the head in gold; thus displaying what is only a barbarous kind of magnanimity, for it is not a sign of nobility to refrain from selling the proofs of one's valour. It is rather true that it is bestial to continue one's hostility against a slain fellow man."

The Celts also believed that if they attached the head of their enemy to a pole or a fence near their house, the head would start crying when the enemy was near.

The Celtic headhunters venerated the image of the severed head as a continuing source of spiritual power. If the head is the seat of the soul, possessing the severed head of an enemy, honorably reaped in battle, added prestige to any warrior's reputation. According to tradition the buried head of a god or hero named Bran the Blessed protected Britain from invasion across the English Channel.

[edit]

Names for Celts

The origin of the various names used since classical times for the people known today as the Celts is obscure and has been controversial. It appears that none of the terms recorded were ever used by Celtic speakers of themselves. In particular, there is no record of the term "Celt" being used in connection with the inhabitants of Ireland and Britain prior to the 19th century.

[edit]

The name "Gauls"

English Gaul(s), French Gaulois(es), Spanish Galo(s), Latin Gallus or Galli, German Gallier might be from an originally Celtic ethnic or tribal name (perhaps borrowed into Latin during the early 400s BC, Celtic expansions into Italy). Its root may be the Common Celtic *galno, meaning "power" or "strength". Greek Galatai (see Galatia in Anatolia) seems to be based on the same root, borrowed directly from the same hypothetical Celtic source which gave us Galli (the suffix -atai is simply an ethnic name indicator).

[edit]

The word "Welsh"

The word Welsh is a Germanic word, yet it may ultimately have a Celtic source. It may be the result of an early borrowing (in the 4th century BC) of the Celtic tribal name Volcae into early Germanic (becoming the Proto-Germanic *Walh-, "Foreigner" and the suffixed form *Walhisk-). The Volcae were one of the Celtic peoples that barred, for two centuries, the southward expansion of the German tribes in central Germany on the line of the Hartz mountains and into Saxony and Silesia.

In the middle ages certain districts of what is now Germany were known as "Welschland" as opposed to "Deutschland", and the word is cognate with Vlach (see: Etymology of Vlach) and Walloon as well as the 'wall' in Cornwall. During the early Germanic period, the term seems to have been applied to the peasant population of the Roman Empire, most of whom were, in the areas immediately settled by the Germans, of ultimately Celtic origin.

[edit]

The name "Celts"

English Celt(s), Latin Celtus pl. Celti (Celtae), Greek Κέλτης pl. Κέλτες seem to be based on a native Celtic ethnic name (singular *Celtos or *Celta with plurals *Celti or *Celta:s), of unsure etymology. The root would seem to be a Primitive Indo-European *kel- or (s)kel-, but there are several such roots of various meanings to choose from (*kel- "to be prominent", *kel- "to drive or set in motion", *kel- "to strike or cut" etc.)

[edit]

See also

Lusitanians

Saka

Cimmerians

Scythians

Amazons

Cimbri

Belgae

Ancient Britain

Celtic mythology
Irish mythology
Celtic language
Welsh language
Cornish language
Celtic law
Celtic art
Celtic music
Celtic knot
Celtic High Crosses
Celtic Christianity
Cumbric language
List of Celts
List of Celtic tribes
The Celt belt
Proto-Germanic
Modern Celts
Pronunciation of Celtic
Pan-Celticism
Celtic League (political organisation)
Celtic Congress
Latin-celt
Franco-celt
[edit]

Endnotes

- [^] "The pronunciation of the word remains ambiguous, however, a conflict between its Greek root, *keltoi*, and its path through French, where *celtique* is pronounced with a soft c: 'sell-TEEK'. Although many dictionaries, including the OED, prefer the soft c pronunciation, most students of Celtic culture prefer the hard c: 'KELL-tik', in acknowledgement of its Greek origin." [MacKillop, 1998, p. XVII]
- [^] (Ref.: Parth. 30.1-2). URL accessed on December 5, 2005.
- [^] Lhuyd, Edward. *Archæologia britannica*. [cf. p. 290]
- [^] Map of Celtic Lands. URL accessed on December 5, 2005.
- [edit]

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[edit]

External links

Celts and Romans

The Celts

"A Y Chromosome Census of the British Isles" (pdf)

BBC "English and Welsh are races apart"

BBC "Descendents of the ancient Britons in genetic survey results for Rush and Castlerea, Ireland, 2003".

Categories: Cleanup from December 2005 | Ancient Roman enemies and allies |

Ancient peoples | Celts | Ethnic groups of Europe

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Hawaii

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit.

This article is about the U.S. State; for other uses, see Hawaii (disambiguation).

State of Hawaii

Moku'āina o Hawai'i

Flag of Hawaii State seal of Hawaii

(In detail) (In detail)

State nickname: The Aloha State

Map of the United States with Hawaii highlighted

Official languages Hawaiian and English

Capital Honolulu

Largest city Honolulu

Governor Linda Lingle (R)

Senators Daniel Inouye (D)

Daniel Akaka (D)

Area

- Total

- % water Ranked 43rd

28,337 km²

41.2

Population

- Total (2000)

- Density Ranked 42nd

1,211,537

42.75/km²

Admission into Union August 21, 1959 (50th)

Time Zone Hawaii: UTC-10/ (no daylight saving time)

Coordinates

- Latitude

- Longitude

- Width

- Length

18°55'N to 29°N

154°40'W to 162°W

n/a km

2,450 km

Elevation

- Highest point

- Mean

- Lowest point

4,207 m

925 m

0 m

Abbreviations

- USPS

- ISO 3166-2

HI

US-HI

Web site www.hawaii.gov/

Hawaii (Hawaiian/Hawaiian English: Hawai‘i, with the ‘okina; also, historically, the Sandwich Islands) is the archipelago of the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific Ocean.

Admitted on August 21, 1959, Hawaii constitutes the 50th state of the United States and is situated 2500 miles from the mainland. It is the southernmost part of that country. As of the 2000 U.S. Census it had a population of 1,211,537 people. Honolulu is the largest city and the state capital.

Hawai‘i is the most recently admitted state of the United States. In addition to possessing the southernmost point in the United States, it is the only state that lies completely in the tropics. As one of two states outside the contiguous United States (the other being Alaska), it is the only state without territory on the mainland of any continent and it is the only state that continues to grow due to active lava flows, most notably from Kīlauea. Ethnically, Hawai‘i is the only state that has a majority group that is non-white (and one of only four in which non-Hispanic whites do not form a majority) and has the largest percentage of Asian Americans. For various reasons, Hawai‘i is considered the endangered species capital of the United States.

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Symbols

The state constitution and various other measures of the Hawai'i State Legislature established official symbols meant to embody the distinctive culture and heritage of Hawai'i. These include a state bird, state fish, state flower, state gem, state mammal, state tree and the state muffin, though only a few other states share this symbol, like Washington. Included are the two statues representing Hawai'i in the United States Capitol.

The primary symbol is the state flag, Ka Hae Hawai'i, influenced by the British Union Flag and features eight horizontal stripes representing the eight major Hawaiian Islands. The constitution declares the state motto to be Ua Mau ke Ea o ka 'Āina i ka Pono, a pronouncement of King Kamehameha III meaning, "The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness." It was also the motto of the kingdom, republic and territory. The official languages are Hawaiian and Hawaiian English. Hawaiian Pidgin is an unofficial language. The state song is Hawai'i pono'i, written by King Kalākaua and composed by Henri Berger. Hawai'i Aloha is the unofficial state song, often sung in official state event.

Hawaiian Goose

Nēnē

State Bird

Reef Triggerfish

Humuhumunukunukuāpua'a

State Fish

Hawaiian Hibiscus

Ma'o hau hele

State Flower

Candlenut
Kuku'i
State Tree

Humpback Whale
Koholā kuapi'o
State Mammal

Father Damien Statue
State Capitol

Kamehameha Statue
Ali'iolani Hale - State Supreme Court

[edit]

Geography
Main article: Hawaiian Islands

Nineteen islands and atolls extending across a distance of 2,400 km (1,500 mi) comprise the Hawaiian Archipelago. The main islands are the eight high islands at the southeastern end of the island chain. These islands are, in order from the northwest to southeast, Ni'ihau, Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, Kaho'olawe, Maui and the Island of Hawai'i.

Map of Hawaii

Map of Hawaii - PDF

All of the Hawaiian Islands were formed by volcanoes arising from the sea floor through a vent described in geological theory as a hotspot. The theory maintains that as the tectonic plate beneath much the Pacific Ocean moves in a northwesterly direction, the hot spot remains stationary, slowly creating new volcanoes. This explains why only volcanoes on the southern half of the Island of Hawai'i are presently active. The last volcanic eruption outside the Island of Hawai'i happened at Haleakalā on Maui in the late 18th century. The newest volcano to form is Lō'ihi, deep below the waters off the south coast of the Island of Hawai'i.

The isolation of the Hawaiian Islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, and the wide range of environments to be found on high islands located in and near the tropics, has resulted in a vast array of endemic flora and fauna. The volcanic activity and subsequent erosion created impressive geological features. Those conditions make Mount Wai'ale'ale the wettest place on earth; it averages 11.7 m (460 in) of rain annually.

The movement of the Hawaiian royal family from the Island of Hawai'i to Maui and subsequently to O'ahu explains why certain population centers exist where they do today. The largest city, Honolulu, was the one chosen by King Kamehameha III as the capital of his kingdom due to the natural harbor there, the present-day Honolulu Harbor. Other large cities and towns include Hilo, Kahului and Līhu'e.

Ni'ihau

Kaua'i

O'ahu

Maui

Moloka'i

Lāna'i

Kaho'olawe

Hawai'i

[edit]

Climate

The Climate of Hawaii is typical of tropical areas. It is famous for being warm throughout the whole year; during the summer, the temperature may reach to around 90 degrees Farenheit. Though people who live in Hawaii often complain about the heat, tourists generally enjoy the warm weather, as many of them come from locations of colder climates. Thus, Hawaii has become a popular tourist destination in the wintertime, when the Hawaiian weather would be above 70 degrees Farenheit. Hawaii is also popular with tourists in the summer because it does not suffer from the same heat waves that occur in the continental North America -- Hawaii has tradewinds which keep excess heat away.

The main portions of Oahu can be divided into Windward and Leeward sections, divided

by a mountain range. The Windward side enjoys more rain. However the Leeward side's drier climate has benefitted toward the plantation industries.

[edit]

History

[edit]

Hawaiian antiquity

Main article: Ancient Hawai'i, Hawaiian mythology, Polynesian mythology

Anthropologists believe that Polynesians from the Marquesas and Society Islands first populated the Hawaiian Islands in approximately 300AD, followed by Tahitian settlers in approximately 1300AD who conquered and eliminated the original inhabitants of the islands. These Tahitian conquerors preserved memories of their migrations orally through genealogies and folk tales, like the stories of Hawai'iloa and Pa'ao. Relations with other Polynesian groups were sporadic during the early migratory periods, and Hawai'i grew from small settlements to a complex society in near isolation. Voyaging between Hawai'i and the South Pacific apparently ceased with no explanation several centuries before European arrival. Local chiefs called ali'i ruled their settlements and fought to extend their sway and defend their communities from predatory rivals. Warfare was endemic. The general trend was towards chiefdoms of increasing size, even encompassing whole islands.

Vague reports by various European explorers suggest that Hawai'i was visited by foreigners well before the 1778 arrival of British explorer Captain James Cook. Historians credited Cook with the discovery after he was the first to plot and publish the geographical coordinates of the Hawaiian Islands. Cook named his discovery the Sandwich Islands in honor of one of his sponsors, John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich.

[edit]

Hawaiian kingdom

Main article: Kingdom of Hawai'i

After a series of battles that ended in 1795 and peaceful cession of the island of Kaua'i in 1810, the Hawaiian Islands were united for the first time under a single ruler who would become known as King Kamehameha the Great. He established the House of Kamehameha, a dynasty that ruled over the kingdom until 1872. One of the most important events during those years was the suppression of the Hawaii Catholic Church. That led to the Edict of Toleration that established religious freedom in the Hawaiian Islands. The death of the bachelor King Kamehameha V who did not name an heir resulted in the election of King Lunalilo. After him, governance was passed on to the House of Kalākaua. However, local businessmen effectively rendered the monarchy powerless by enacting the Bayonet Constitution. Among other things, it stripped the king of his administrative authorities, eliminated voting rights for all Asians, and required

specific income and property requirements for all other European and native Hawaiian voters, essentially limiting the electorate to elite native Hawaiians and Europeans. King Kalākaua reigned until his death in 1891. His sister, Lili‘uokalani, succeeded him to the throne and ruled until her dethronement in 1893, a coup d'état orchestrated by local businessmen and government officials with the help of an armed militia The Honolulu Rifles, instigated by the Queen's threat to abrogate the constitution. Governance was again passed, this time into the hands of a provisional government and then to an independent Republic of Hawaii. During the kingdom era and subsequent republican regime, ‘Iolani Palace — the only official royal residence in the United States today — served as the capitol buildings.

Kamehameha

Kamehameha II

Kamehameha III

Kamehameha IV

Kamehameha V

Lunalilo

Kalākaua

Lili‘uokalani

[edit]

Hawaiian territory

Main article: Territory of Hawai‘i

The Newlands Resolution was passed on July 7, 1898, formally annexing Hawai‘i as a United States territory. In 1900, it was granted self-governance and retained ‘Iolani Palace as the territorial capitol building. Though several attempts were made to achieve statehood, Hawai‘i remained a territory for sixty years. Plantation owners, like those that

comprised the so-called Big Five, found territorial status convenient, enabling them to continue importing cheap foreign labor; such immigration was prohibited in various other states of the Union.

The power of the plantation owners was finally broken by activist descendants of original immigrant laborers. Because they were born in a United States territory, they were legal U.S. citizens. Expecting to gain full voting rights, they actively campaigned for statehood for the Hawaiian Islands.

In March 1959, both houses of Congress passed the Admission Act and U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed it into law. (The act excluded Palmyra Atoll, part of the Kingdom and Territory of Hawai'i, from the new state.) On June 27 of that year, a plebiscite was held asking Hawaiians to vote on accepting the statehood bill. Hawai'i voted 17 to 1 to accept. On August 21, church bells throughout Honolulu were rung upon the proclamation that Hawai'i was finally the 50th state of the Union.

[edit]

Hawaiian statehood

After statehood, Hawai'i quickly became a modern state with a construction boom and rapidly growing economy. The Hawai'i Republican Party, which was strongly supported by the plantation owners, was voted out of office. In its place, the Democratic Party of Hawai'i dominated state politics for forty years. The state also worked toward restoring the native Hawaiian culture. The Hawai'i State Constitutional Convention of 1978 heralded what some called a Hawaiian renaissance. Its delegates created programs that sought to revive the indigenous Hawaiian language and culture. In addition, they sought to promote native control over Hawaiian issues by creating the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

[edit]

Languages

Main articles: Hawaiian language, Hawaiian English

The state of Hawai'i has two official languages as prescribed by the Constitution of Hawai'i adopted at the 1978 constitutional convention: Hawaiian and English. Article XV, Section 4 requires the use of Hawaiian in official state business such as public acts, documents, laws and transactions. Standard Hawaiian English, a subset of American English, is also commonly used for other formal business. Hawaiian is legally acceptable in all legal documents, from depositions to legislative bills. The third and fourth most spoken languages are Tagalog and Japanese, respectively.

[edit]

Origins

Before the arrival of Captain James Cook, the Hawaiian language was purely a spoken

language. The first written form of Hawaiian was developed by American Protestant missionaries in Hawai'i during the early 19th century. The missionaries assigned letters from the English alphabet that roughly corresponded to the Hawaiian sounds. Later, additional characters were added to clarify pronunciation. The 'okina indicates a glottal stop while the macron called kahakō signifies a long vowel sound. When a Hawaiian word is spelled without any necessary 'okina and kahakō, it is impossible for someone who does not already know the word to guess at the proper pronunciation. Omission of the 'okina and kahakō in printed texts can even obscure the meaning of the word. For example, the word lanai means stiff-necked. However, when spelled as lānai it means veranda while Lāna'i refers to an island. This can be a problem in interpreting 19th century Hawaiian texts recorded in the older orthography. For these reasons, careful writers use the modern Hawaiian orthography.

[edit]

Revival

As a result of the constitutional provision, interest in the Hawaiian language was revived in the late 20th century. Public and independent schools throughout the state began teaching Hawaiian language standards as part of the regular curricula, beginning with preschool. With the help of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, also created by the 1978 constitutional convention, specially designated Hawaiian language immersion schools were established where students would be taught in all subjects using Hawaiian. Also, the University of Hawai'i System developed the only Hawaiian language graduate studies program in the world. Municipal codes were altered in favor of Hawaiian place and street names for new civic developments.

[edit]

Pidgin

Over the course of Hawaiian history, a third language was developed that is in common use throughout the state today. Originally considered a mere dialect of Hawaiian English, cultural anthropologists have recently reached consensus that Hawaiian Pidgin is a distinct language on its own. Hawaiian Pidgin finds its origins in the sugarcane and pineapple plantations as laborers from different cultures were forced to find their own ways of communicating and understanding each other. Laborer emigrants from different countries — China, Japan, Korea, Philippines, Portugal — began composing their own words and phrases based on their own language traditions, which merged with Hawaiian and Hawaiian English.

[edit]

Debates

A somewhat divisive political issue that has arisen since the Constitution of Hawai'i adopted Hawaiian as an official state language is the exact spelling of the state's name. As prescribed in the Admission Act of 1959 that granted Hawaiian statehood, the federal government recognizes Hawaii to be the official state name. However, many

state and municipal entities and officials have recognized Hawai'i to be the correct state name. Official government publications, as well as department and office titles, use the traditional Hawaiian spelling. Private entities, including local mass media, also have shown a preference for the use of the 'okina. While in local Hawaiian society the spelling and pronunciation of Hawai'i is preferred in nearly all cases, even by standard English speakers, the federal spelling is used for purposes of interpolitical relations between other states and foreign governments.

The nuances in the Hawaiian language debate are often not obvious or well-appreciated outside Hawai'i. The issue has often been a source of friction in situations where correct naming conventions are mandated, as people frequently disagree over which spelling is correct or incorrect, and where it is correctly or incorrectly applied.

[edit]

See also
Hawaiian alphabet
[edit]

Government

The state government of Hawai'i is modeled after the federal government with adaptations originating from the kingdom era of Hawaiian history. As codified in the Constitution of Hawai'i, there are three branches of government: executive, legislative and judicial.

The executive branch is led by the Governor of Hawai'i and assisted by the Lieutenant Governor of Hawai'i, both elected on the same ticket. The governor, in residence at Washington Place, is the only public official elected for the state government in a statewide race; all other administrators and judges are appointed by the governor. The lieutenant governor is concurrently the Secretary of State of Hawai'i. Both the governor and lieutenant governor administer their duties from the Hawai'i State Capitol. The governor and lieutenant governor oversee the major agencies and departments of the executive of which there are twenty.

The legislative branch consists of the Hawai'i State Legislature — the twenty-five members of the Hawai'i State Senate led by the President of the Senate and the fifty-one members of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives led by the Speaker of the House. They also govern from the Hawai'i State Capitol. The judicial branch is led by the highest state court, the Hawai'i State Supreme Court, which uses Ali'iolani Hale as its chambers. Lower courts are organized as the Hawai'i State Judiciary.

The state is represented in the Congress of the United States by a delegation of four members. They are the senior and junior United States Senators, the representative of the First Congressional District of Hawai'i and the representative of the Second Congressional District of Hawai'i. Many Hawai'i residents have been appointed to administer other agencies and departments of the federal government by the President

of the United States. All federal officers of Hawai'i administer their duties locally from the Prince Kuhio Federal Building near the Aloha Tower and Honolulu Harbor.

Hawaii is primarily dominated by the Democratic Party and has supported Democrats in 10 of the 12 presidential elections in which it has participated. In 2004, John Kerry won the state's 4 electoral votes by a margin of 9 percentage points with 54% of the vote. Every county in the state supported the Democratic candidate.

The Prince Kuhio Federal Building also houses agencies of the federal government such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service and the United States Secret Service. The building is the site of the federal courts and the offices of the United States Attorney for the District of Hawaii, principal law enforcement officer of the United States Department of Justice in the United States District Court for the District of Hawaii.

Linda Lingle
Governor
(Republican)

James R. Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor
(Republican)

Robert Bunda
Senate President
(Democrat)

Daniel Inouye
U.S. Senator
(Democrat)

Daniel Akaka
U.S. Senator
(Democrat)

Neil Abercrombie
U.S. Representative
(Democrat)

Edward Case
U.S. Representative
(Democrat)

Harry Kim
Mayor of Hawai'i
(Nonpartisan)

Mufi Hannemann
Mayor of Honolulu
(Nonpartisan)

Bryan J. Baptiste
Mayor of Kaua'i
(Nonpartisan)

Alan Arakawa
Mayor of Maui
(Nonpartisan)

Unique to Hawai'i is the way it has organized its municipal governments. There are no incorporated cities in Hawai'i except the City & County of Honolulu. All other municipal governments are administered at the county level. The county executives are the Mayor of Hawai'i, Mayor of Honolulu, Mayor of Kaua'i and Mayor of Maui. All mayors in the state are elected in nonpartisan races.

The officers of the federal and state governments have been historically elected from the Democratic Party of Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Republican Party. Municipal charters in the state have declared all mayors to be elected in nonpartisan races.

[edit]

Economy

The history of Hawai'i can be traced through a succession of dominating industries: sandalwood, whaling, sugarcane, pineapple, military, tourism, and education. Since statehood was achieved in 1959, tourism continues to be the largest industry in Hawai'i, contributing 24.3% of the Gross State Product (GSP) in 1997. Most recently, new efforts were created to diversify the economy. The total gross output for the state in 2003 was

USD \$47 billion. Per capita income for Hawai'i residents was USD \$30,441.

Industrial exports from Hawai'i include food processing and apparel. However, because of the considerable shipping distance to markets on the west coast of the United States and ports of Japan, these industries play a small role in the Hawai'i economy. The main agricultural exports are nursery stock and flowers, coffee, macadamia nuts, pineapple, livestock, and sugar cane. Agricultural sales for 2002, according to the Hawai'i Agricultural Statistics Service, were USD \$370.9 million from diversified agriculture, USD \$100.6 million from pineapple, and USD \$64.3 million from sugarcane.

Hawai'i is known for its relatively high per capita state tax burden. In the years 2002 and 2003, Hawai'i residents had the highest state tax per capita at USD \$2,757 and USD \$2,838 respectively. This rate can be explained partly by the fact that services such as education, health care and social services are all rendered at the state level — as opposed to the municipal level as all other states. Also, millions of tourists contribute to the collection figure by paying the general excise tax and hotel room tax. Therefore, not all the taxes collected come directly from residents. However, business leaders have often considered the state's tax burden as being too high, contributing to both higher prices and the perception of an unfriendly business climate [1]. For more information about commercial industries in Hawai'i, see the list of businesses in Hawai'i.

[edit]

Education

Main article: Hawai'i State Department of Education

Hawai'i is currently the only state in the union with a unified school system statewide. It is also the oldest public education system west of the Mississippi River. Policy decisions are made by the fourteen-member state Board of Education, with thirteen members elected for four-year terms and one non-voting student member. The Board of Education sets statewide educational policy and hires the state superintendent of schools, who oversees the operations of the state Department of Education. The Department of Education is also divided into seven districts, four on O'ahu and one for each of the other counties.

The structure of the state Department of Education has been a subject of discussion and controversy in recent years. The main rationale for the current centralized model is equity in school funding and distribution of resources: leveling out inequalities that would exist between highly populated O'ahu and the more rural Neighbor Islands, and between lower-income and more affluent areas of the state. This system of school funding differs from many localities in the United States where schools are funded from local property taxes.

However, policy initiatives have been made in recent years toward decentralization. Current Governor Linda Lingle is a proponent of replacing the current statewide board with seven elected district boards. The Democrat-controlled state legislature opposed

her proposal, instead favoring expansion of decision-making power to the schools and giving schools more discretion over budgeting. Political debate of structural reform is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

[edit]

Schools and academies

Hawai'i has the distinction of educating more students in independent institutions of secondary education than any other state in the United States. It also has four of the largest independent schools: Mid-Pacific Institute, 'Iolani School, Kamehameha Schools and Punahou School. Other popular independent schools include: Hawai'i Baptist Academy, Hawai'i Preparatory Academy, Maryknoll School, St. Andrew's Priory, and Saint Louis School. A highly rated public high school often cited as comparable to the state's independent schools is Moanalua High School. It should be noted that independent and charter schools can select their students, while the regular public schools must take all students in their district.

For a comprehensive list of independent schools, see the list of independent schools in Hawai'i. For a comprehensive list of public schools, see the list of public schools in Hawai'i.

[edit]

Colleges and universities

Graduates of institutions of secondary learning in Hawai'i often either enter directly into the workforce or attend colleges and universities. While many choose to attend colleges and universities on the mainland or elsewhere, most choose to attend one of many institutions of higher learning in Hawai'i. The largest of these institutions is the University of Hawai'i System. Its main campuses are in Hilo, Manoa and West O'ahu. Students choosing private education attend Brigham Young University Hawai'i, Chaminade University of Honolulu, Hawai'i Pacific University and University of the Nations. The Saint Stephen Diocesan Center is a seminary of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Honolulu. For a comprehensive list of colleges and universities, see the list of colleges and universities in Hawai'i.

[edit]

Problems

Public schools in Hawai'i have to deal with large populations of children of non-native English speaking immigrants and a culture that is different in many ways from mainland US, where most of the course materials come from and where most of the standards for schools are set.

The public elementary, middle, and high school scores in Hawai'i tend to be below average on national tests as mandated under the No Child Left Behind Act. Some of this can be attributed to the Hawai'i State Board of Education requiring all eligible

students to take these tests and reporting all student test scores unlike, for example, Texas and Michigan. Results reported in August 2005 indicate that two-thirds of Hawai'i's schools failed to reach federal minimum performance standards in math and reading (of 282 schools across the state, 185 failed [2]).

On the other hand, results of the ACT college placement tests show that Hawai'i class of 2005 seniors scored slightly above the national average (21.9 compared with 20.9) (Honolulu Advertiser, Aug. 17, 2005, p. B1). It should be noted that fewer students take the ACT examination than take the more widely accepted SAT examination. On the SAT Hawai'i's college bound seniors tend to score below the national average except in math.

Hawai'i, like all other states in the United States, is struggling to provide educational services in its public schools with shrinking budgets.

[edit]

Media

[edit]

Newspapers

Two major competing Honolulu-based newspapers serve all of Hawai'i. The Honolulu Advertiser is owned by Gannett Pacific Corporation while the Honolulu Star-Bulletin is owned by Black Press of British Columbia in Canada. Both are two of the largest newspapers in the United States, in terms of circulation. Other locally published newspapers are available to residents of the various islands. The Hawai'i business community is served by the Pacific Business News and Hawai'i Business Magazine. The largest religious community in Hawai'i is served by the Hawai'i Catholic Herald. Honolulu Magazine is a popular magazine that offers local interest news and feature articles. Apart from the mainstream press, the state also enjoys a vibrant ethnic publication presence with newspapers for the Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean and Native Hawaiian communities. In addition, there is an alternative weekly, the Honolulu Weekly.

[edit]

Television

All the major television networks are represented in Hawai'i through KFVE (WB network affiliate), KGMB (CBS network affiliate), KHET (PBS network affiliate), KHNL (NBC network affiliate), KHON (Fox network affiliate), KIKU (UPN network affiliate) and KITV (ABC network affiliate), among others. From Honolulu, programming at these stations is rebroadcast to the various other islands via networks of satellite transmitters. Until the advent of satellite, most network programming was broadcast a week behind mainland scheduling. The various production companies that work with the major networks have produced television series and other projects in Hawai'i. Most notable were police dramas like Magnum P.I. and Hawaii Five-O. Currently, the hit TV show Lost is filmed in

the Hawaiian Islands. A comprehensive list of such projects can be seen at the list of Hawai'i television series.

[edit]

Film

Hawai'i a growing film industry administered by the state through the Hawai'i Film Office. Several television shows, movies and various other media projects were produced in the Hawaiian Islands taking advantage of the natural scenic landscapes as backdrops. Notable films produced in Hawai'i or were inspired by Hawai'i include Hawaii, Blue Hawaii, From Here to Eternity, South Pacific, Raiders Of The Lost Ark, Jurassic Park, Outbreak, Waterworld, Six Days Seven Nights, George of the Jungle, 50 First Dates, Pearl Harbor, Blue Crush and Lilo & Stitch.

Hawai'i is home to a prominent film festival known as the Hawaii International Film Festival.

[edit]

Culture

Main article: Culture of Hawai'i

The aboriginal culture of Hawai'i is Polynesian. Hawai'i represents the northernmost extension of the vast Polynesian triangle of the south and central Pacific Ocean. While traditional Hawaiian culture remains only as vestiges influencing modern Hawaiian society, there are reenactments of ancient ceremonies and traditions throughout the islands. Some of these cultural influences are strong enough to have impacted the culture of the United States at large, including the popularity (in greatly modified form) of lu'aus and hula.

Customs and etiquette in Hawai'i

Folklore in Hawai'i

Hawaiian mythology

List of Hawai'i state parks

List of Hawai'i State Landmarks

List of Hawai'i-related topics

Literature in Hawai'i

Music of Hawai'i

Polynesian mythology

Tourism of Hawai'i

[edit]

Demographics

Historical populations

Census

year	Population
------	------------

1960	632,772
------	---------

1970 768,561
1980 964,691
1990 1,108,229
2000 1,211,537

As of 2004, the population of Hawai'i was 1,262,840.

The population of Hawai'i is approximately 1.2 million, while the de facto population is over 1.3 million due to military presence and tourists. O'ahu is the most populous island, with a population of just under one million.

Hawaii was the first majority-minority state in the United States since the early twentieth century. According to the 2000 Census, 6.6% of Hawai'i's population identified themselves as Native Hawaiian, 24.3% were White or Caucasian, including Portuguese and 41.6% were Asian, including 0.1% Asian Indian, 4.7% Chinese, 14.1% Filipino, 16.7% Japanese, 1.9% Korean and 0.6% Vietnamese. 1.3% were other Pacific Islander which includes Samoan, Tongan, Tahitian, Maori and Micronesian, and 21.4% described themselves as mixed (two or more races/ethnic groups). 1.8% were Black or African American and 0.3% were Native American and Alaska Native.

The second group of foreigners to arrive upon Hawai'i's shores, after the Europeans, were the Chinese. Chinese employees serving on Western trading ships disembarked and settled starting in 1789. In 1820 the first American missionaries arrived in Hawai'i to preach Christianity and teach the Hawaiians what the missionaries considered "civilized" ways. A large proportion of Hawai'i's population has become a people of Asian ancestry (especially Chinese, Japanese and Filipino), many of whom are descendants from those waves of early foreign immigrants brought to the islands in the nineteenth century, beginning in the 1850's, to work on the sugar plantations. The first Japanese arrived in Hawai'i on February 9, 1885.

The largest city is the capital, Honolulu, located along the southeast coast of the island of O'ahu. Other populous cities include Hilo, Kāne'ohe, Kailua, Pearl City, Kahului, and Kailua-Kona.

As of 2000, 73.4% of Hawai'i residents age 5 and older speak English at home and 7.9% speak Pacific Island languages. Tagalog is the third most spoken language at 5.4%, followed by Japanese at 5.0% and Chinese at 2.6%.

Religion

Christian = 68%

Protestant = 42%

Congregational/United Church of Christ= 3%

Baptist = 2%

Methodist = 2%

Catholic = 24%

Mormon = 2%

Agnostic/non-religious = 18%

Buddhist = 9%

Other(e.g. Shinto, Tao, pagan) = 5%

See also: Richest Places in Hawai'i
[edit]

Famous people from Hawai'i

The list of famous people from Hawai'i is a comprehensive, alphabetized list of persons who have achieved fame that presently or at one time claimed Hawai'i as their home. Separate registers of members of the Hawaiian royal family and Hawai'i politicians are also available.

Father Damien

Beatified towards sainthood by Pope John Paul II

Mother Marianne Cope

Beatified towards sainthood by Pope Benedict XVI

Hiram Fong

First Chinese American and Asian American elected United States Senator

Duke Kahanamoku

Inventor of modern surfing and 1912, 1920 and 1924 Olympics champion

George R. Ariyoshi

First Japanese American and Asian American elected governor in the United States

Eric Shinseki

First Japanese American and Asian American member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Ben Cayetano

First Filipino American and second Asian american elected governor in the United States

[edit]

See also
Hawai'i Trivia

Akaka Falls

Haleakalā

Na Pali Coast

Satellite Image

[edit]

External links

Commons

Wikimedia Commons has media related to:

Hawaii

Wikisource

Wikisource has original text related to this article:

Hawaii

Travel guide to Hawaii from Wikitravel

Official state homepage

Hawai'i Visitors & Convention Bureau

HawaiiAnswers.com - a FAQ repository for Hawai'i

Satellite image of Hawaiian Islands at NASA's Earth Observatory

Google maps

Economic History of Hawaii

Flag of Hawai'i State of Hawai'i

Cities | Geography | History | Landmarks

State capital: Honolulu

Largest communities: Hilo | Honolulu | Kahului | Waipahu | Līhu'e

Islands: Hawai'i | Kaho'olawe | Kaua'i | Lāna'i | Maui | Moloka'i | Ni'ihau |

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands | O'ahu

Counties: Hawai'i | Honolulu | Kalawao | Kaua'i | Maui

Languages: Hawaiian | English | Pidgin

History of Hawaii

Ancient Hawaii | Kingdom of Hawaii | Provisional Government of Hawaii | Republic of Hawaii | Territory of Hawaii | State of Hawaii

Countries in Oceania

Australia : Australia · Norfolk Island

Melanesia : Fiji · New Caledonia · Papua New Guinea · Solomon Islands · Vanuatu

Micronesia : Guam · Kiribati · Marshall Islands · Northern Mariana Islands · Federated States of Micronesia · Nauru · Palau

Polynesia : American Samoa · Cook Islands · French Polynesia · New Zealand · Niue · Pitcairn · Samoa · Tokelau · Tonga · Tuvalu · Wallis and Futuna

Island groups in Polynesia

Cook Islands N.Z. | Easter Island (Rapa Nui) Chile | French Polynesia Fr. | Hawai'i U.S. | Loyalty Islands Fr. | New Zealand (Aotearoa) | Niue N.Z. | Pitcairn Islands U.K. | Samoa (American) U.S. incl. Swains I. | Samoa (western, independent) | Tokelau N.Z. | Tonga | Tuvalu | Wallis and Futuna Fr.

In the Federated States of Micronesia:

In the extreme north of Fiji:

In Papua New Guinea:

In the Solomon Islands:

In Vanuatu:

Kapingamarangi | Nukuoro

Rotuma

Nuguria | Nukumanu | Takuu

Anuta | Ontong Java | Pileni | Rennell | Sikaiana | Tikopia

Emae | Mele

Political divisions of the United States Flag of the United States

States Alabama | Alaska | Arizona | Arkansas | California | Colorado | Connecticut | Delaware | Florida | Georgia | Hawaii | Idaho | Illinois | Indiana | Iowa | Kansas | Kentucky | Louisiana | Maine | Maryland | Massachusetts | Michigan | Minnesota | Mississippi | Missouri | Montana | Nebraska | Nevada | New Hampshire | New Jersey | New Mexico | New York | North Carolina | North Dakota | Ohio | Oklahoma | Oregon | Pennsylvania | Rhode Island | South Carolina | South Dakota | Tennessee | Texas | Utah | Vermont | Virginia | Washington | West Virginia | Wisconsin | Wyoming

Federal district District of Columbia

Insular areas American Samoa | Baker Island | Guam | Howland Island | Jarvis Island | Johnston Atoll | Kingman Reef | Midway Atoll | Navassa Island | Northern Mariana Islands | Palmyra Atoll | Puerto Rico | Virgin Islands | Wake Island

Categories: Oceanic countries | Hawaii | States of the United States

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Bân-lâm-gú

Català

Česky

Cymraeg

Dansk

Deutsch

Eesti

Español

Esperanto

فارسی

Français

Gàidhlig

Galego

Hawai`i

עברית

Ido
Íslenska
Italiano
日本語
ქართული
한국어
Latviešu
Lietuvių
Magyar
Македонски
Nederlands
Norsk (bokmål)
Norsk (nynorsk)
Polski
Português
Română
Русский
Simple English
Slovenčina
Slovenščina
Српски / Srpski
Suomi
Svenska
ไทย
Українська
中文

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Africa

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit.

Portal Africa Portal

This article is about the continent; for other things named Africa, see Africa (disambiguation)

Africa is the world's second-largest continent and second most populous after Asia. At about 30,244,050 km² (11,677,240 mi²) including its adjacent islands, it covers 20.3

percent of the total land area on Earth. With over 800 million human inhabitants in 54 countries, it accounts for about one seventh of the world human population. (See List of African countries by population)

A satellite composite image of Africa

Enlarge

A satellite composite image of Africa

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1 Etymology

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3 History

4 Politics

4.1 Precolonial Africa

4.2 Colonial Africa

4.3 Post-colonial Africa

4.4 Modern Africa

5 Economy

6 Demographics

7 Languages

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9 Religion

10 Territories

10.1 Independent states

10.2 Territories, possessions, départements

10.3 Disputed territories

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Etymology

World map showing Africa (geographically)

Enlarge

World map showing Africa (geographically)

The name Africa came into Western use through the Romans, who used the name *Africa terra* — "land of the Afri" (plural, or "Afer" singular) — for the northern part of the continent, as the province of Africa with its capital Carthage, corresponding to modern-day Tunisia.

The Afri were a tribe — possibly Berber — who dwelt in North Africa in the Carthage area. The origin of Afer may be connected with Phoenician *`afar*, dust (also found in most other Semitic languages); some other etymologies that have been postulated for the ancient name 'Africa' that are much more debatable include:

the Latin word *aprica*, meaning "sunny";

the Greek word *aphrike*, meaning "without cold" (see also List of traditional Greek place

names). The historian Leo Africanus (1495-1554) attributed the origin to the Greek word phrike (φρίκη, meaning "cold and horror"), combined with the negating prefix a-, so meaning a land free of cold and horror. However, the change of sound from ph to f in Greek is datable to about the first century, so this cannot really be the origin of the name.

Egypt was considered part of Asia by the ancients, and first assigned to Africa by the geographer Ptolemy (85 - 165 AD), who accepted Alexandria as Prime Meridian and made the isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea the boundary between Asia and Africa. As Europeans came to understand the real extent of the continent, the idea of Africa expanded with their knowledge.

[edit]

Geography

Main article: Geography of Africa

Africa in the Blue marble picture, with Antarctica to the south, and the Sahara and Arabian peninsula at the top of the globe

Enlarge

Africa in the Blue marble picture, with Antarctica to the south, and the Sahara and Arabian peninsula at the top of the globe

Africa is the largest of the three great southward projections from the main mass of the Earth's surface. It includes within its remarkably regular outline an area, of c. 30,244,050 km² (11,677,240 mi²), including the islands.

Separated from Europe by the Mediterranean Sea, it is joined to Asia at its northeast extremity by the Isthmus of Suez (transected by the Suez Canal), 130 km (80 miles) wide. (Geopolitically, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula east of the Suez Canal is often considered part of Africa, as well.) From the most northerly point, Cape Blanc (Ra's al Abyad) in Tunisia (37°21' N), to the most southerly point, Cape Agulhas in South Africa (34°51'15" S), is a distance approximately of 8,000 km (5,000 miles); from Cape Verde, 17°33'22" W, the westernmost point, to Ras Hafun in Somalia, 51°27'52" E, the most easterly projection, is a distance (also approximately) of 7,400 km (4,600 miles). The length of coast-line is 26,000 km (16,100 miles) and the absence of deep indentations of the shore is shown by the fact that Europe, which covers only 9,700,000 km² (3,760,000 square miles), has a coast-line of 32,000 km (19,800 miles).

The main structural lines of the continent show both the east-to-west direction characteristic, at least in the eastern hemisphere, of the more northern parts of the world, and the north-to-south direction seen in the southern peninsulas. Africa is thus composed of two segments at right angles, the northern running from east to west, the southern from north to south, the subordinate lines corresponding in the main to these two directions.

[edit]

History

Main article: History of Africa

Map of Africa 1890

Enlarge

Map of Africa 1890

Africa is home to the oldest inhabited territory on earth, with the human race originating from this continent. During the the mid 20th century, anthropologists discovered many fossils and evidence of human occupation perhaps as early as 7 million years ago. The famous British/African Leakey family discovered several species of early ape-like humans thought to have evolved into modern day man, such as *Australopithecus afarensis* (radiometrically dated to 3.9-3.0 million years BCE), *Paranthropus boisei* (2.3-1.4 million BCE) and *Homo ergaster* (c. 600,000-1.9 million BCE).

(See Human evolution.)

The Ishango Bone, dated to c. 25,000 years ago, shows tallies in mathematical notation. Throughout humanity's prehistory, Africa (like all other continents) had no nation states, and was instead inhabited by groups of hunter-gatherers such as the Khoi and San (formerly known as bushmen).

Around 3300 BC, the historical record opens in Africa with the rise of literacy in Egypt, which continued with varying levels of influence over other areas until 343 BC. Other prominent civilizations include Ethiopia, the Nubian kingdom, the kingdoms of the Sahel (Ghana, Mali, and Songhai) and Great Zimbabwe.

In 1482, the Portuguese established the first of many trading stations along the Guinea coast at Elmina. The chief commodities dealt in were slaves, gold, ivory and spices. The European discovery of America in 1492 was followed by a great development of the slave trade, which, before the Portuguese era, had been an overland trade almost exclusively, and never confined to any one continent.

But at the same time that slavery was ending in Europe, in the early 19th century the European imperial powers staged a massive "scramble for Africa" and occupied most of the continent, creating many colonial nation states, and leaving only two independent nations: Liberia, the Black American colony, and Ethiopia. This occupation continued until after the conclusion of the Second World War, when all colonial states gradually obtained formal independence.

Today, Africa is home to over 50 independent countries, all but 2 of which still have the borders drawn up during the era of European colonialism.

[edit]

Politics

Map showing European claimants to the African continent at the beginning of World War I

Map showing European claimants to the African continent at the beginning of World War I
[edit]

Precolonial Africa

This section is a stub. You can help by adding to it.
[edit]

Colonial Africa

Colonialism had a destabilizing effect on what had been a number of ethnic groups that is still being felt in African politics. Prior to European influence, national borders were not much of a concern, with Africans generally following the practice of other areas of the world, such as the Arabian peninsula, where a group's territory was congruent with its military or trade influence. The European insistence of drawing borders around territories to isolate them from those of other colonial powers often had the effect of separating otherwise contiguous political groups, or forcing traditional enemies to live side by side with no buffer between them. For example, the Congo River, although it appears to be a natural geographic boundary, had groups that otherwise shared a language, culture or other similarity who resided on both sides. The division of the land between Belgium and France along the river isolated these groups from each other. Those who lived in Saharan or Sub-Saharan Africa and traded across the continent for centuries often found themselves crossing "borders" that existed only on European maps.

In nations that had substantial European populations, for example Rhodesia and South Africa, systems of second-class citizenship were often set up in order to give Europeans political power far in excess of their numbers. However, the lines were not often drawn strictly across racial lines. In Liberia, the citizens who were descendants of American slaves managed to have a political system for over 100 years that gave ex-slaves and natives to the area roughly equal legislative power despite the fact the ex-slaves were outnumbered ten to one in the general population. The inspiration for this system was the United States Senate, which had balanced the power of free and slave states despite the much larger population of the former.

Europeans often changed the balance of power, created ethnic divides where they did not previously exist, and introduced a cultural dichotomy detrimental to the native inhabitants in the areas they controlled. For example, in what is now Rwanda and Burundi, two ethnic groups Hutus and Tutsis had merged into one culture by the time Belgian colonists had taken control of the region in the 19th century. No longer divided by ethnicity as intermingling, inter-marriage, and merging of cultural practices over the centuries had long since erased visible signs of a culture divide, the Belgians instituted a policy of racial categorization, upon taking control of the region, as racial based categorization and philosophies was a fixture of the European culture of that time. The term Hutu originally referred to the agricultural-based Bantu speaking tribes that moved into present day Rwandan and Burundi from the West, and the term Tutsi referred to North Eastern cattle-based tribes that migrated into the region later. The terms to the

indigenous peoples eventually came to describe a person's economic class. Those individuals who owned roughly 10 or more cattle were considered Tutsi, and those with fewer were considered Hutu, regardless of ancestral history. This was not a strict line but a general rule of thumb, and one could move from Hutu to Tutsi and vice versa.

The Belgians introduced a racialised system. Those individuals who had characteristics the Europeans admired - fairer skin, ample height, narrow noses, etc. - were given power amongst the colonized peoples. The Belgians determined these features were more ideally Hamitic, Hamitic in turn being more ideally European and belonged to those people closest to Tutsi in ancestry. They instituted a policy of issuing identity cards based on this philosophy. Those closest to this ideal were proclaimed Tutsi and those not were proclaimed Hutu.

[edit]

Post-colonial Africa

Since independence, African states have frequently been hampered by instability, corruption, violence, and authoritarianism. The vast majority of African nations are republics that operate under some form of the presidential system of rule. Few nations in Africa have been able to sustain democratic governments, instead cycling through a series of brutal coups and military dictatorships.

A number of Africa's post-colonial political leaders were poorly educated and ignorant on matters of governance; great instability, however, was mainly the result of marginalization of other ethnic groups and graft under these leaders.

As well, many used the positions of power to ignite ethnic conflicts that had been exacerbated, or even created, under colonial rule. In many countries, the military was perceived as being the only group that could effectively maintain order and ruled most nations in Africa during the 70s and early 80s.

During the period from the early 1960s to the late 1980s Africa had over 70 coups and 13 presidential assassinations.

Cold War conflicts between the United States and the Soviet Union also played a role in the instability. When a country became independent for the first time, it was often expected to align with one of the two superpowers. Many countries in Northern Africa received Soviet military aid, while many in Central and Southern Africa were supported by the United States and/or France. The 1970s saw an escalation as newly independent Angola and Mozambique aligned themselves with the Soviet Union and the West and South Africa sought to contain Soviet influence.

Border and territorial disputes have also been common, with the European-imposed borders of many nations being widely contested through armed conflicts.

Failed government policies and political corruption have also resulted in many

widespread famines, and significant portions of Africa remain with distribution systems unable to disseminate enough food or water for the population to survive. The spread of disease is also rampant, especially the spread of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the associated Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), which has become a deadly epidemic on the continent.

Despite numerous hardships, there have been some signs the continent has hope for the future. Democratic governments seem to be spreading, though are not yet the majority (National Geographic claims 13 African nations can be considered truly democratic). As well, many nations have at least nominally recognized basic human rights for all citizens, though in practice these are not always recognized, and have created reasonably independent judiciaries.

There are clear signs of increased networking among African organisations and states. In the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire), rather than rich, non-African countries intervening, about half-a-dozen neighbouring African countries got involved (see also Second Congo War). The death toll has been estimated by some to be 3.5 million since the conflict began in 1998. This might play a role similar to that of World War II for Europe, after which the people in the neighbouring countries decide to integrate their societies in such a way that war between them becomes as unthinkable as a war between, say, France and Germany would be today.

Political associations such as the African Union are also offering hope for greater co-operation and peace between the continent's many countries.

Extensive human rights abuses still occur in several parts of Africa, often under the oversight of the state. Most of such violations occur for political reasons, often times as a 'side-effect' of civil war. Countries where major human rights violations have been reported in recent times include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Sudan, and Côte d'Ivoire.

[edit]

Modern Africa

Most western countries place limitations on aid to African nations. These limitations are often used to control the governments of these African nations; as a result, these nations are turning to non-traditional sources of financial aid. China has increasingly provided financial aid to Africa in order to secure contracts on natural resources. There usually is no political prescription.

[edit]

Economy

Main article: Economy of Africa

Africa is the world's poorest inhabited continent: the United Nations' Human

Development Report 2003 (of 175 countries) found that positions 151 (Gambia) to 175 (Sierra Leone) were taken up entirely by African nations.

It has had (and in some ways is still having) a shaky and uncertain transition from colonialism, with increases in corruption and despotism being major contributing factors to its poor economic situation. While rapid growth in China and now India, and moderate growth in South America, has lifted millions beyond subsistence living, Africa has gone backwards in terms of foreign trade, investment, and per capita income. This poverty has widespread effects, including lower life expectancy, violence, and instability - factors intertwined with the continent's poverty.

The major economic success is South Africa, which is developed to the extent that it has its own mature stock exchange. This is partly due to its wealth of natural resources, being the world's leading producer of both gold and diamonds, and partly due to its well-established legal system. South Africa also has access to capital, markets and know how.

Nigeria sits on one of the largest proven oil reserves in the world and has the highest population among nations in Africa, with one of the fastest growing. However, most of the oil industry is foreign owned, and the industry is rife with corruption at the national level so that very little oil money stays in the country, and what does goes to a very small percentage of the population.

[edit]

Demographics

Africans may be grouped according to whether they live north or south of the Sahara Desert; these groups are called North Africans and Sub-Saharan Africans, respectively. Arabic-speaking Arab-Berber peoples predominate in North Africa, while Sub-Saharan Africa is dominated by a number of disparate populations often grouped according to their language, Niger-Congo predominately in West Africa, Nilo-Saharan in the Eastern highlands and Khoi-san in the south. Speakers of Bantu languages (part of the Niger-Congo family) are the majority in southern, central and east Africa proper; but there are also several Nilotic groups in East Africa, and a few remaining indigenous Khoisan ('San' or 'Bushmen') and Pygmy peoples in southern and central Africa, respectively. Bantu-speaking Africans also predominate in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, and are found in parts of southern Cameroon and southern Somalia. In the Kalahari Desert of Southern Africa, the distinct people known as the Bushmen (also "San", closely related to, but distinct from "Hottentots") have long been present. The San are physically distinct from other Africans and are the indigenous people of southern Africa. "Pygmies" are the indigenous people of central Africa.

The peoples of North Africa are primarily Arab-Berber; the Arabs who arrived in the 7th century have assimilated the indigenous Berber people. The Semitic Phoenicians, and the European Greeks and Romans settled in North Africa as well. Berber peoples remain a significant minority within Morocco and Algeria, and are present in Tunisia and

Libya. The Tuareg and other often-nomadic peoples are the principal inhabitants of the Saharan interior of North Africa. Nubians also developed civilizations in North Africa during ancient times.

During the past century or so, small but economically important colonies of Lebanese and Chinese have also developed in the larger coastal cities of West and East Africa, respectively.

Some Ethiopian and Eritrean groups (like the Amhara and Tigrayans, collectively known as "Habesha") have Semitic (Sabaeen) ancestry. The Somalis as a people originated in the Ethiopian highlands, but most Somali clans can trace Arab ancestry as well. Sudan and Mauritania are divided between a mostly Arab north and a native African south (although many of the Arabs of Sudan clearly have African ancestry, and are far off in appearance from Arabs in Iraq or Algeria). Some areas of East Africa, particularly the island of Zanzibar and the Kenyan island of Lamu, received Arab and Asian Muslim settlers and merchants throughout the Middle Ages.

Beginning in the 16th century, Europeans such as the Portuguese and Dutch began to establish trading posts and forts along the coasts of western and southern Africa. Eventually, a large number of Dutch, augmented by French Huguenots and Germans settled in what is today South Africa. Their descendants, the Afrikaners and the Coloureds, are the largest European-descended groups in Africa today. In the 19th century, a second phase of colonization brought a large number of French and British settlers to Africa. The Portuguese settled mainly in Angola, but also in Mozambique. The French settled in large numbers in Algeria where they became known collectively as *piets-noirs*, and on a smaller scale in other areas of North and West Africa as well as in Madagascar. The British settled chiefly in South Africa as well as the colony of Rhodesia, and in the highlands of what is now Kenya. Germans settled in what is now Tanzania and Namibia, and there is still a population of German-speaking white Namibians. Smaller numbers of European soldiers, businessmen, and officials also established themselves in administrative centers such as Nairobi and Dakar. Decolonization during the 1960s often resulted in the mass emigration of European-descended settlers out of Africa — especially from Algeria, Angola, Kenya and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). However, in South Africa and Namibia, the white minority remained politically dominant after independence from Europe, and a significant population of white Africans remained in these two countries even after democracy was finally instituted at the end of the Cold War. South Africa has also become the preferred destination of white Anglo-Zimbabweans, and of migrants from all over southern Africa.

European colonization also brought sizeable groups of Asians, particularly people from the Indian subcontinent, to British colonies. Large Indian communities are found in South Africa, and smaller ones are present in Kenya, Tanzania, and some other southern and east African countries. A fairly large Indian community in Uganda was expelled by the dictator Idi Amin in 1972, though many have since returned. The islands in the Indian Ocean are also populated primarily by people of Asian origin, often mixed

with Africans and Europeans. The Malagasy people of Madagascar are a Malay people, but those along the coast are generally mixed with Bantu, Arab, Indian and European origins. Malay and Indian ancestries are also important components in the group of people known in South Africa as Coloureds (people with origins in two or more races and continents).

[edit]

Languages

Map showing the distribution of African language families and some major African languages. Afro-Asiatic extends into the Sahel and Southwest Asia. Niger-Congo is divided to show the size of the Bantu sub-family.

Enlarge

Map showing the distribution of African language families and some major African languages. Afro-Asiatic extends into the Sahel and Southwest Asia. Niger-Congo is divided to show the size of the Bantu sub-family.

Main article: African languages

By most estimates Africa contains well over a thousand languages. There are four major language families native to Africa.

The Afro-Asiatic languages are a language family of about 240 languages and 285 million people widespread throughout North Africa, East Africa, the Sahel, and Southwest Asia.

The Nilo-Saharan language family consists of more than a hundred languages spoken by 30 million people. Nilo-Saharan languages are mainly spoken in Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, and northern Tanzania.

The Niger-Congo language family covers much of Sub-Saharan Africa and is probably the largest language family in the world in terms of different languages. A substantial number of them are the Bantu languages spoken in much of sub-Saharan Africa.

The Khoisan languages number about 50 and are spoken in Southern Africa by approximately 120 000 people. Many of the Khoisan languages are endangered. The Khoi and San peoples are considered the original inhabitants of this part of Africa.

With a few notable exceptions in East Africa, nearly all African countries have adopted official languages that originated outside the continent and spread through colonialism or human migration. For example, in numerous countries English and French are used for communication in the public sphere such as government, commerce, education and the media. Arabic, Portuguese, Afrikaans and Malagasy are other examples of originally non-African languages that are used by millions of Africans today, both in the public and private spheres.

[edit]

Culture

Rather than one culture, Africa has a number of cultures that overlap. The most conventional distinction is that between sub-Saharan Africa and the northern countries

from Egypt to Morocco, who largely associate themselves with Arabic culture. In this comparison, the nations to the south of the Sahara are considered to consist of many cultural areas, in particular that of the Bantu linguistic group.

Divisions may also be made between Francophone Africa and the rest of Africa, in particular the former British colonies of southern and East Africa. Another cultural fault-line is that between those Africans living traditional lifestyles and those who are essentially modern. The traditionalists are sometimes subdivided into pastoralists and agriculturalists.

African art reflects the diversity of African cultures. The oldest existing art from Africa are 6000-year old carvings found in Niger, while the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt was the world's tallest architectural accomplishment for four thousand years until the creation of the Eiffel Tower. The Ethiopian complex of monolithic churches at Lalibela, of which the Church of St. George is representative, is regarded as another marvel of engineering.

The music of Africa is one of its most dynamic art forms. Egypt has long been a cultural focus of the Arab world, while remembrance of the rhythms of sub-Saharan Africa, in particular west Africa, was transmitted through the Atlantic slave trade to modern blues, jazz, reggae, rap, and rock and roll. Modern music of the continent includes the highly complex choral singing of southern Africa and the dance rhythms of soukous, dominated by the music of the Democratic Republic of Congo. A recent development of the 21st century is the emergence of African hip hop, in particular a form from Senegal is blended with traditional mbalax. Recently in South Africa, a form of music related to house music known under the name Kwaito has developed, although the country has been home to its own form of South African jazz for some time, while Afrikaans music is completely distinct and comprised mostly of traditional Boere musiek, and forms of Folk and Rock.

List of African musicians

List of African writers

African Cinema

Afrology

[edit]

Religion

Africans profess a wide variety of religious beliefs, with Christianity and Islam being the most widespread. Approximately 40% of all Africans are Christians and another 40% Muslims. Roughly 20% of Africans primarily follow indigenous African religions. A small number of Africans also have beliefs from the Judaic tradition, such as the Beta Israel and Lemba tribes.

The indigenous African religions tend to revolve around animism and ancestor worship. A common thread in traditional belief systems was the division of the spiritual world into "helpful" and "harmful". Helpful spirits are usually deemed to include ancestor spirits that

help their descendants, and powerful spirits that protected entire communities from natural disaster or attacks from enemies; whereas harmful spirits include the souls of murdered victims who were buried without the proper funeral rites, and spirits used by hostile spirit mediums to cause illness among their enemies. While the effect of these early forms of worship continues to have a profound influence, belief systems have evolved as they interact with other religions.

The formation of the Old Kingdom of Egypt in the third millennium BCE marked the first known complex religious system on the continent. Around the ninth century BCE, Carthage (in present-day Tunisia) was founded by the Phoenicians, and went on to become a major cosmopolitan center of the ancient world in which deities from neighboring Egypt, Rome and the Etruscan city-states were worshipped.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church officially dates from the fourth century, and is thus one of the first established Christian churches anywhere. At first Christian Orthodoxy made gains in modern-day Sudan and other neighbouring regions; however following the spread of Islam, growth was slow and restricted to the highlands.

Islam entered Africa as Muslims conquered North Africa between 640 and 710, beginning with Egypt. They established Mogadishu, Melinde, Mombasa, Kilwa, and Sofala, following the sea trade down the coast of East Africa, and diffusing through the Sahara desert into the interior of Africa -- following in particular the paths of Muslim traders. Muslims were also among the Asian peoples who later settled in British-ruled Africa.

Many Africans were converted to West European forms of Christianity during the colonial period. In the last decades of the twentieth century, various sects of Charismatic Christianity rapidly grew. A number of Roman Catholic African bishops have even been mentioned as possible papal candidates. African Christians appear to be more socially conservative than their co-religionists in much of the industrialized world, which has quite recently led to tensions within denominations such as the Anglican and Methodist Churches.

[edit]

Territories

Political Map of Africa

Enlarge

Political Map of Africa

Physical map of Africa

Enlarge

Physical map of Africa

[edit]

Independent states

East Africa

East Africa proper

Burundi (also sometimes considered part of Central Africa)
Kenya
Mozambique (also sometimes considered part of Southern Africa)
Rwanda (also sometimes considered part of Central Africa)
Tanzania
Uganda
North East Africa

Djibouti
Eritrea
Ethiopia
Somalia (including Somaliland)
Sudan
Central Africa

Angola (also sometimes considered part of Southern Africa)
Burundi (also sometimes considered part of East Africa)
Cameroon (also sometimes considered part of West Africa)
Central African Republic
Chad (also sometimes considered part of West Africa)
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Equatorial Guinea (also sometimes considered part of West Africa)
Gabon (also sometimes considered part of West Africa)
Rwanda (also sometimes considered part of East Africa)
Republic of Congo
Zambia (also sometimes considered part of Southern Africa)
North Africa

Algeria
Egypt (includes small portion of territory in Asia)
Libya
Mauritania (also sometimes considered part of West Africa)
Morocco
Tunisia
Southern Africa

Angola (also sometimes considered part of Central Africa)
Botswana
Lesotho
Malawi
Mozambique (also sometimes considered part of East Africa)
Namibia
South Africa

Swaziland
Zambia (also sometimes considered part of Central Africa)
Zimbabwe
West Africa

Benin
Burkina Faso
Cameroon (also sometimes considered part of Central Africa)
Chad (also sometimes considered part of Central Africa)
Côte d'Ivoire
Equatorial Guinea (also sometimes considered part of Central Africa)
Gabon (also sometimes considered part of Central Africa)
The Gambia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Liberia
Mali
Mauritania (also sometimes considered part of North Africa)
Niger
Nigeria
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Togo
African Island Nations

Cape Verde (West Africa)
Comoros (Southern Africa)
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Mauritius (Southern Africa)
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Seychelles (East Africa)
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Territories, possessions, départements
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Réunion (France)
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Western Sahara (claimed by Morocco)
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See also

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African Anarchism

African philosophy

African Union

African cuisine

Confederation of African Football

Congo craton

Ecology of Africa

Education in Africa

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Universities in Africa

List of African countries by population density

List of African countries by population

List of African countries by GDP

List of African stock exchanges

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External links

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allAfrica.com current news/events, information, economy stats, etc.

BBC News In Depth - Africa 2005: Time for Change?

Guardian Unlimited - Special Report: Hear Africa 05

Directories

Contemporary Africa Database

The Index on Africa directory from The Norwegian Council for Africa

LookSmart - Africa directory category

MBendi extensive business information, based in South Africa

Open Directory Project - Africa directory category

Yahoo! - Africa directory category

African studies resources

Columbia University - African Studies

Library of Congress - African & Middle Eastern Reading Room

Stanford University - Africa South of the Sahara

University of Chicago - Joseph Regenstein Library: African Studies

University of Pennsylvania - African Studies Center

Politics

Africa Action Africa Action is the oldest organization in the US working on Africa affairs.

It is a national organization that works for political, economic and social justice in Africa.

African Anarchism: The History of a Movement

An Irish anarchist in Africa, western Africa from anarchist perspective.

Commission for Africa

African Unification Front

Photos and Information

Jungle Photos Jungle Photos Africa provides images and information on various countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Africam - African Wildlife Webcams

Sports

Confederation of African Football; in English and French

Tourism

Travel guide to Africa from Wikitravel

Countries in Africa

Algeria | Angola | Benin | Botswana | Burkina Faso | Burundi | Cameroon | Cape Verde |

Central African Republic | Chad | Comoros | Democratic Republic of the Congo |

Republic of the Congo | Côte d'Ivoire | Djibouti | Egypt | Equatorial Guinea | Eritrea |

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Mozambique | Namibia | Niger | Nigeria | Rwanda | São Tomé and Príncipe | Senegal |

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Continents and regions of the World

Antarctica

Africa-Eurasia

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Australia

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South America Geological supercontinents :

Gondwana • Laurasia • Pangea • Rodinia

Regions of the World

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West Africa

Americas: Andean states | Caribbean | Central America | Great Lakes | Great Plains |

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Oceania: Australasia | Melanesia | Micronesia | Polynesia | Pacific Rim

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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attacotti>

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About this capture

The name "Attacotti" (also Atecotti, A(t)ticotti, Ategutti) appears in several late Roman texts. The historian Ammianus_Marcellinus includes this 'warlike race of men' ("bellicosa hominum natio") in a list of peoples disturbing Roman_Britain c.364-7, including the Scots, Picts and Saxons. Ammianus' contemporary St. Jerome (writing c.393-7) claims that in his youth he personally saw some Attacotti in Gaul. Jerome highlights the promiscuous marriage customs and savage cannibalism of this 'British people' ("gens Britannica"), apparently identifying Attacotti with classical reports of polyandry practised by the ancient Britons and of cannibalism among the peoples of Ireland. If there is any truth to Jerome's rhetorical allusion, he probably saw Attacotti already in Roman service, presumably during his stay at the western capital Trier (c.365-70). Certainly by c.395 some Attacotti had been recruited into the Roman_Army and the "Notitia Dignitatum" lists three regiments bearing this title stationed in Gaul, Italy and Illyricum, though it is doubtful that these units remained ethnically distinct. Hostile Attacotti are not recorded after c.367. Modern commentators have tended to locate the Attacotti on the northern frontier of Roman Britain, in the context of Scottish and Pictish raids, though there is no ancient authority for this; Ammianus merely reports simultaneous barbarian pressure on various fronts. Throughout the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Scottish antiquaries persistently placed the Attacotti in Dumbartonshire, prompting Edward_Gibbon to muse on the possibility of a 'race of cannibals' in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. This entirely spurious tradition was based upon 'Richard of Cirencester', a mediaeval forgery perpetrated by Charles Bertram in 1757. Scottish clan and family lineages drawn from the Attacotti are equally inauthentic.

==Irish Origin Theory== The word "Attacotti" and its variants "Atecotti", "A(t)ticotti", "Ategutti" in Latin texts most probably represent Roman attempts at rendering the Old Irish "aithechthúatha", not a specific tribal name, but a collective description for lower-status population groups throughout Ireland, usually translated into English as 'rent-paying tribes', 'vassal communities' or 'tributary peoples.' The appearance of hostile 'Attacotti' in Roman sources in the 360s corresponds chronologically with various tribal and dynastic migrations from southern Ireland and subsequent Irish settlement in Western Britain in the fourth century, in some instances possibly with Roman sanction. Later Irish and Welsh traditions concerning these population movements preserved the names of certain tributary Irish groups, which seem to have been displaced by the expansion of the Eóganachta, the group of septs which came to dominate Munster in the later fourth century.

==Pre-Celtic Origin Theory== Some older scholarship has speculated that Attacotti were an aboriginal, pre-Indo-European substratum of the population of northern Britain. This thesis has generated much conjecture concerning this 'race', for the most part at the level of pseudo-history. Nevertheless, numerous monument-stones discovered in Caithness and elsewhere in northern Scotland feature Ogham inscriptions that do not match any known Indo-European language. Scholars have speculated that these inscriptions predate even the Pictish occupation of the

region. =='Bibliography'== *Philip Rance, 'Attacotti, Déisi and Magnus Maximus: the Case for Irish Federates in Late Roman Britain', "Britannia" 32 (2001) 243-270; *Ralf Scharf, 'Aufrüstung und Truppenbenennung unter Stilicho: Das Beispiel der Atecotti-Truppen', "Tyche" 10 (1995) 161-178.

Category:Ancient_Roman_enemies_and_allies Category:Roman_Britain

Category:Ancient_Britons Category:Ancient_Ireland Category:Ancient_history

Category:Ancient_peoples Category:Ethnic_groups_of_Europe

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European>

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Europe

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

(Redirected from European)

This article is about the continent. For other meanings, see Europe (disambiguation).

Portal Europe Portal

Europe is geologically and geographically a peninsula or subcontinent, forming the westernmost part of Eurasia. It is conventionally considered a continent, which, in this case, is more of a cultural distinction than a geographic one. It is bounded to the north by the Arctic Ocean, to the west by the Atlantic Ocean and to the south by the Mediterranean and Black Seas and the Caucasus. Europe's boundary to the east is vague, but has traditionally been given as the Ural Mountains and Caspian Sea to the southeast: the Urals are considered by most to be a geographical and tectonic landmark separating Asia from Europe.

See also Continent, Bicontinental country, and Table of European territories and regions.

World map showing Europe (geographically)

Enlarge

World map showing Europe (geographically)

A satellite composite image of Europe

Enlarge

A satellite composite image of Europe

Europe is the world's second-smallest continent in terms of area, covering around 10,790,000 km² (4,170,000 sq mi) or 2.1% of the Earth's surface, and is only larger than Australia. In terms of population, it is the third-largest continent (Asia and Africa are larger) with a population of more than 700,000,000, or about 11% of the world's population.

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[edit]

Etymology

Picture of Europa, carried away by bull-shaped Zeus.

Enlarge

Picture of Europa, carried away by bull-shaped Zeus.

In Greek mythology, Europa was a Phoenician princess who was abducted by Zeus in bull form and taken to the island of Crete, where she gave birth to Minos. For Homer, Europé (Greek: Ευρώπη; see also List of traditional Greek place names) was a mythological queen of Crete, not a geographical designation. Later Europa stood for mainland Greece, and by 500 BC its meaning had been extended to lands to the north.

The Greek term Europe has been derived from Greek words meaning broad (eurys) and face (ops) -- broad having been an epitheton of Earth herself in the reconstructed Proto-Indo-European religion; see Prithvi (Plataia). A minority, however, suggest this Greek popular etymology is really based on a Semitic word such as the Akkadian erebu meaning "sunset" (see also Erebus). From the Middle Eastern vantagepoint, the sun does set over Europe, the lands to the west. Likewise, Asia is sometimes thought to have derived from the Akkadian word asu, meaning "sunrise", and is the land to the east from a Mesopotamian perspective.

[edit]

History

Main article: History of Europe

Europe has a long history of cultural and economic achievement, starting as far back as

the Palaeolithic, although this is true for the rest of the Old World as well. The recent discovery at Monte Poggiolo, Italy, of thousands of hand-shaped stones, tentatively carbon-dated to 800,000 years ago, may prove to be of particular importance.

The origins of Western democratic and individualistic culture are often attributed to Ancient Greece, though numerous other distinct influences, in particular Christianity, can also be credited with the spread of concepts like egalitarianism and universality of law.

The Roman Empire divided the continent along the Rhine and Danube for several centuries. Following the decline of the Roman Empire, Europe entered a long period of changes arising from what is known as the Age of Migrations. That period has been known as the "Dark Ages" to Renaissance thinkers. During this time, isolated monastic communities in Ireland and elsewhere carefully safeguarded and compiled written knowledge accumulated previously. The Renaissance and the New Monarchs marked the start of a period of discovery, exploration, and increase in scientific knowledge. In the 15th century Portugal opened the age of discoveries, soon followed by Spain. They were later joined by France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom in building large colonial empires with vast holdings in Africa, the Americas, and Asia.

After the age of discovery, the ideas of democracy took hold in Europe. Struggles for independence arose, most notably in France during the period known as the French Revolution. This led to vast upheaval in Europe as these revolutionary ideas propagated across the continent. The rise of democracy led to increased tensions within Europe on top of the tensions already existing due to competition within the New World. The most famous of these conflicts was when Napoleon Bonaparte rose to power and set out on a conquest, forming a new French empire that soon collapsed. After these conquests Europe stabilised, but the old foundations were already beginning to crumble.

The Industrial Revolution started in the United Kingdom in the late 18th century, leading to a move away from agriculture, much greater general prosperity and a corresponding increase in population. Many of the states in Europe took their present form in the aftermath of World War I. From the end of World War II through the end of the Cold War, Europe was divided into two major political and economic blocks: Communist nations in Eastern Europe and capitalist countries in Western Europe. Around 1990, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Eastern bloc disintegrated.

[edit]

Geography and extent

Main article: Geography of Europe

The political and geographic boundaries of Europe are not always synonymous. This physical and political map shows Europe at its furthest extent, reaching to the Urals. [Enlarge](#)

The political and geographic boundaries of Europe are not always synonymous. This physical and political map shows Europe at its furthest extent, reaching to the Urals.

Geographically Europe is a part of the larger landmass known as Eurasia. The continent begins at the Ural Mountains in Russia, which define Europe's eastern boundary with Asia. The southeast boundary with Asia isn't universally defined. Most commonly the Ural or, alternatively, the Emba river can serve as possible boundaries. The boundary continues with the Caspian Sea, and then the Araxes river in the Caucasus, and on to the Black Sea; the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles conclude the Asian boundary. The Mediterranean Sea to the south separates Europe from Africa. The western boundary is the Atlantic Ocean, but Iceland, much farther away than the nearest points of Africa and Asia, is also often included in Europe. There is ongoing debate on where the geographical centre of Europe is.

At times "Europe" is defined with greater regard to political, economic, and other cultural considerations. This has led to there being several different Europes that are not always identical in size, including or excluding countries according to the definition of Europe used.

Almost all European countries are members of the Council of Europe, the exceptions being Belarus, and the Holy See (Vatican City).

The idea of the European continent is not held across all cultures. Some non-European geographical texts refer to the continent of Eurasia, or to the European peninsula, given that Europe is not surrounded by sea. In the past concepts such as Christendom were deemed more important.

In another usage, Europe is increasingly being used as a short-form for the European Union (EU) and its members, currently consisting of 25 member states. A number of other European countries are negotiating for membership, and several more are expected to begin negotiations in the future (see Enlargement of the European Union).

[edit]

Physical features

In terms of shape, Europe is a collection of connected peninsulas. The two largest of these are "mainland" Europe and Scandinavia to the north, divided from each other by the Baltic Sea. Three smaller peninsulas (Iberia, Italy and the Balkans) emerge from the southern margin of the mainland into the Mediterranean Sea, which separates Europe from Africa. Eastward, mainland Europe widens much like the mouth of a funnel, until the boundary with Asia is reached at the Ural Mountains.

Land relief in Europe shows great variation within relatively small areas. The southern regions, however, are more mountainous, while moving north the terrain descends from the high Alps, Pyrenees and Carpathians, through hilly uplands, into broad, low northern plains, which are vast in the east. This extended lowland is known as the Great European Plain, and at its heart lies the North German Plain. An arc of uplands also exists along the northwestern seaboard, beginning in the western British Isles and continuing along the mountainous, fjord-cut spine of Norway.

This description is simplified. Sub-regions such as Iberia and Italy contain their own complex features, as does mainland Europe itself, where the relief contains many plateaus, river valleys and basins that complicate the general trend. Iceland and the British Isles are special cases. The former is a land unto itself in the northern ocean which is counted as part of Europe, while the latter are upland areas that were once joined to the mainland until rising sea levels cut them off.

Due to the few generalisations that can be made about the relief of Europe, it is less than surprising that its many separate regions provided homes for many separate nations throughout history.

[edit]

Biodiversity

Having lived side-by-side with agricultural peoples for millennia, Europe's animals and plants have been profoundly affected by the presence and activities of man. With the exception of Scandinavia and northern Russia, few areas of untouched wilderness are today to be found in Europe, except for different natural parks.

The main natural vegetation cover in Europe is forest. The conditions for growth are very favourable. In the north, the Gulf Stream and North Atlantic Drift warm the continent. Southern Europe could be described as having a warm, but mild climate. There are frequent summer droughts in this region. Mountain ridges also affect the conditions. Some of these (Alps, Pyrenees) are oriented east-west and allow the wind to carry large masses of water from the ocean in the interior. Others are oriented south-north (Scandinavian Mountains, Dinarides, Carpathians, Apennines) and because the rain falls primarily on the side of mountains that is oriented towards sea, forests grow well on this side, while on the other side, the conditions are much less favourable. Few corners of mainland Europe have not been grazed by livestock at some point in time, and the cutting down of the pre-agricultural forest habitat caused disruption to the original plant and animal ecosystems.

Eighty to ninety per cent of Europe was once covered by forest. It stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the Arctic Ocean. Though over half of Europe's original forests disappeared through the centuries of colonisation, Europe still has over one quarter of the world's forests - spruce forests of Scandinavia, vast pine forests in Russia, chestnut rainforests of the Caucasus and the cork oak forests in the Mediterranean. During recent times, deforestation has been stopped and many trees were planted. However, in many cases conifers have been preferred over original deciduous trees, because these grow quicker. The plantations and monocultures now cover vast areas of land and this offers very poor habitats for European forest dwelling species. The amount of original forests in Western Europe is just two to three per cent (in the European part of Russia five to ten per cent). The country with the smallest forest-covered area is Ireland (eight per cent), while the most forested country is Finland (72 per cent).

In "mainland" Europe, deciduous forest prevails. The most important species are beech, birch and oak. In the north, where taiga grows, a very common tree species is the birch tree. In the Mediterranean, many olive trees have been planted, which are very well adapted to its arid climate. Another common species in Southern Europe is the cypress. Coniferous forests prevail at higher altitudes up to the forest boundary and as one moves north within Russia and Scandinavia, giving way to tundra as the Arctic is approached. The semi-arid Mediterranean region hosts much scrub forest. A narrow east-west tongue of Eurasian grassland—the steppe—extends eastwards from Ukraine and southern Russia and ends in Hungary and traverses into taiga to the north.

Glaciation during the most recent ice age and the presence of man affected the distribution of European fauna. As for the animals, in many parts of Europe most large animals and top predator species have been hunted to extinction. The woolly mammoth and aurochs were extinct before the end of the Neolithic period. Today wolves (carnivores) and bears (omnivores) are endangered. Once they were found in most parts of Europe. However, deforestation caused these animals to withdraw further and further. By the Middle Ages the bears' habitats were limited to more or less inaccessible mountains with sufficient forest cover. Today, the brown bear lives primarily in the Balkan peninsula, in the North and in Russia; a small number also persist in other countries across Europe (Austria, Pyrenees etc.), but in these areas brown bear populations are fragmented and marginalised because of the destruction of their habitat. In the far North of Europe, polar bears can also be found. The wolf, the second largest predator in Europe after the brown bear, can be found primarily in Eastern Europe and in the Balkans.

Other important European carnivores are Eurasian lynx, European wild cat, foxes (especially the red fox), jackal and different species of martens, hedgehogs, different species of snakes (vipers, grass snake...), different birds (owls, hawks and other birds of prey)

Important European herbivores are snails, amphibians, fish, different birds, and mammals, like rodents, deers and roe deers, boars, and living in the mountains, marmots, steinbocks, chamoises among others.

Sea creatures are also an important part of European flora and fauna. The sea flora is mainly phytoplankton. Important animals that live in European seas are zooplankton, molluscs, echinoderms, different crayfish, squids and octopuses, fish, dolphins, and whales.

Some animals live in caves, for example proteus and bats.

[edit]

Demographics

Almost all of Europe was possibly settled before or during the last ice age ca. 10,000 years ago. Neanderthal man and modern man coexisted during at least some of this

time. Roman road building helped with the interbreeding of the native Europeans' genetics. In contemporary times Europe has one of the lowest inbreeding rates in the world because of an extensive transport network paired with open borders.

Europe passed well over 600 million people before the turn of the 20th century, but now is entering a period of population decline, for a variety of social factors.

[edit]

Territories and divisions

[edit]

Political divisions

[edit]

Independent states

According to one view of the boundary, the European continent is the area coloured green on this map.

Enlarge

According to one view of the boundary, the European continent is the area coloured green on this map.

See also: Table of European territories and regions

The following independent states have territory in Europe:

Albania

Andorra

Armenia

Austria

Azerbaijan²

Belarus

Belgium

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bulgaria

Croatia

Czech Republic

Cyprus

Denmark

Estonia

Finland

France

Georgia²

Germany

Greece

Hungary

Iceland

Ireland
Italy
Kazakhstan³
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Republic of Macedonia⁴
Malta
Moldova
Monaco
Netherlands
Norway

Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russia⁵
San Marino
Serbia and Montenegro⁶
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Turkey⁷
Ukraine
United Kingdom
Vatican City

2 Azerbaijan and Georgia lie partly in Europe according to the usual definition which consider the crest of the Caucasus as the boundary with Asia.

3 Kazakhstan's European territory consists of a portion west of the Ural and Emba Rivers.

4 The name of this state is a matter of international dispute. See Republic of Macedonia for details.

5 Those territories of Russia lying west of the Ural Mountains are considered as part of Europe.

6 State union of Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro.

7 European Turkey comprises territory to the west and north of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles straits.

2, 3, 5, 7 See Countries in both Europe and Asia for details.

[edit]

Dependent territories

The European territories listed below are recognised as being culturally and

geographically defined. Most have a degree of autonomy. In the list below, each territory is followed by its legal status.

Faroe Islands (autonomous region of Denmark)

Gibraltar (UK overseas territory)

Guernsey (British crown dependency)

Jersey (British crown dependency)

Man, Isle of (British crown dependency)

Svalbard (autonomous region of Norway)

Note that this is not a list of all dependencies of all European countries. Dependencies located on other continents are not listed.

[edit]

Unilaterally seceded territories

Following are breakaway regions of independent states. These regions have declared and de facto achieved independence, but this is not recognised de jure by their home state or by the other independent states.

Abkhazia (from Georgia)

Nagorno-Karabakh (disputed by Armenia and Azerbaijan)

South Ossetia (from Georgia)

Transnistria (from Moldova)

[edit]

Territories under United Nations administration

Kosovo and Metohia (province of Serbia)

[edit]

Table of European territories and regions

Name of territory,

with flag Region 1 Area

(km²) Population

(1 July 2002 est.) Population density

(per km²) Capital

Albania	Albania	Southern Europe	28,748	3,544,841	123.3	Tirana
Andorra	Andorra	Southern Europe	468	68,403	146.2	Andorra la Vella
Armenia	Armenia	Eastern Europe				
(Western Asia) ²	—	—	—	Yerevan		
Austria	Austria	Western Europe	83,858	8,169,929	97.4	Vienna
Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan	Western Asia				
(Eastern Europe) ³	39,730	4,198,491	105.7	Baku		
Belarus	Belarus	Eastern Europe	207,600	10,335,382	49.8	Minsk
Belgium	Belgium	Western Europe	30,510	10,274,595	336.8	Brussels
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Southern Europe				
	3,964,388	77.5	Sarajevo			

Bulgaria	Bulgaria	Eastern Europe	110,910	7,621,337	68.7	Sofia
Croatia	Croatia	Southern Europe	56,542	4,390,751	77.7	Zagreb
Cyprus	Cyprus	Western Asia				
(Southern Europe)	4 5,995	780,133	130.1	Nicosia (Lefkoşa)		
Czech Republic	Czech Republic	Eastern Europe	78,866	10,256,760	130.1	
	Prague					
Denmark	Denmark	Northern Europe	43,094	5,368,854	124.6	Copenhagen
Estonia	Estonia	Northern Europe	45,226	1,415,681	31.3	Tallinn
Faroe Islands	Faeroe Islands (Denmark)	Northern Europe	1,399	46,011	32.9	
	Tórshavn					
Finland	Finland	Northern Europe	337,030	5,183,545	15.4	Helsinki
France	France	Western Europe	547,030	59,765,983	109.3	Paris
Georgia (country)	Georgia	Western Asia				
(Eastern Europe)	5 49,240	2,447,176	49.7	Tbilisi		
Germany	Germany	Western Europe	357,021	83,251,851	233.2	Berlin
Gibraltar	Gibraltar (UK)	Southern Europe	5.9	27,714	4,697.3	
	Gibraltar					
Greece	Greece	Southern Europe	131,940	10,645,343	80.7	Athens
Guernsey	Guernsey (UK)	Northern Europe	78	64,587	828.0	St Peter Port
Hungary	Hungary	Eastern Europe	93,030	10,075,034	108.3	Budapest
Iceland	Iceland	Northern Europe	103,000	279,384	2.7	Reykjavik
Republic of Ireland	Ireland	Northern Europe	70,280	3,883,159	55.3	Dublin
Isle of Man	Isle of Man (UK)	Northern Europe	572	73,873	129.1	
	Douglas					
Italy	Italy	Southern Europe	301,230	57,715,625	191.6	Rome
Jersey	Jersey (UK)	Northern Europe	116	89,775	773.9	Saint Helier
Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan	Central Asia				
(Eastern Europe)	6 — — —	Astana				
Latvia	Latvia	Northern Europe	64,589	2,366,515	36.6	Riga
Liechtenstein	Liechtenstein	Western Europe	160	32,842	205.3	Vaduz
Lithuania	Lithuania	Northern Europe	65,200	3,601,138	55.2	Vilnius
Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Western Europe	2,586	448,569	173.5	Luxembourg
Republic of Macedonia	Macedonia	Southern Europe	25,333	2,054,800		
	81.1 Skopje					
Malta	Malta	Southern Europe	316	397,499	1,257.9	Valetta
Republic of Moldova	Moldova	Eastern Europe	33,843	4,434,547	131.0	
	Chişinău					
Monaco	Monaco	Western Europe	1.95	31,987	16,403.6	Monaco
Netherlands	Netherlands	7 Western Europe	41,526	16,318,199	393.0	
	Amsterdam, The Hague					
Norway	Norway	Northern Europe	324,220	4,525,116	14.0	Oslo
Poland	Poland	Eastern Europe	312,685	38,625,478	123.5	Warsaw
Portugal	Portugal	Southern Europe	92,391	10,084,245	109.1	Lisbon
Romania	Romania	Eastern Europe	238,391	21,698,181	91.0	Bucharest
Russia	Russia	Eastern Europe				
(Asia)	8 3,960,000	106,037,143	26.8	Moscow		

San Marino	San Marino	Southern Europe	61	27,730	454.6	San Marino
Serbia and Montenegro	Serbia and Montenegro	Southern Europe	102,173			
	10,280,000	100.6	Belgrade			
Slovakia	Slovakia	Eastern Europe	48,845	5,422,366	111.0	Bratislava
Slovenia	Slovenia	Southern Europe	20,273	1,932,917	95.3	Ljubljana
Spain	Spain	Southern Europe	504,782	40,077,100	79.4	Madrid
Norway	Svalbard and Jan					
Mayen Islands (Norway)	Northern Europe	62,049	2,868	0.046		
	Longyearbyen					
Sweden	Sweden	Northern Europe	449,964	8,876,744	19.7	Stockholm
Switzerland	Switzerland	Western Europe	41,290	7,301,994	176.8	Bern
Turkey	Turkey	Western Asia				
(Southern Europe)	9 780,580	11,044,932	14.1	Ankara		
Ukraine	Ukraine	Eastern Europe	603,700	48,396,470	80.2	Kyiv
United Kingdom	United Kingdom	Northern Europe	244,820	59,778,002	244.2	
	London					
Vatican City	Vatican City	Southern Europe	0.44	900	2,045.5	Vatican City
Total	10,794,427	707,736,887	65.6			

Notes:

1 Continental regions as per UN categorisations/map. Depending on definitions, various territories cited below (notes 2-6, 8, 9) may be in one or both of Europe and Asia.

2 Armenia is sometimes considered a transcontinental country in Eastern Europe and Western Asia (as per UN categorisations/map).

3 Azerbaijan is often considered a transcontinental country in Western Asia (UN region) and Eastern Europe; population and area figures are for European portion only.

4Cyprus is often considered a transcontinental country in Western Asia (UN region) and Southern Europe; population and area figures are for de jure Greek-administered portion only.

5Georgia is often considered a transcontinental country in Western Asia (UN region) and Eastern Europe; population and area figures are for European portion only.

6Kazakhstan is sometimes considered a transcontinental country in Central Asia (UN region) and Eastern Europe.

7Netherlands population for July 2004; Amsterdam is the de facto capital, while The Hague is the country's administrative seat.

8Russia is generally considered a transcontinental country in Eastern Europe (UN region) and Asia; population and area figures are for European portion only.

9Turkey is generally considered a transcontinental country in Western Asia (UN region) and Southern Europe; population and area figures are for European portion only, including all of Istanbul.

[edit]

Linguistic and cultural regions

The sub-division in several linguistic and cultural regions is much less subjective than the geographical sub-division, since they correspond to people's cultural connections. There are three main groups:

[edit]

Germanic Europe

Germanic Europe, where Germanic languages are spoken. This area corresponds more or less to north-western Europe and some parts of central Europe. The main religion of the region is Protestantism, even if there are also some countries with Catholic majority (particularly Austria). This region consists of: United Kingdom, Ireland, Iceland, Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, the Faroe Islands, German-speaking Switzerland, the Flemish part of Belgium, the Swedish-speaking municipalities of Finland, and the South Tyrol part of Italy.

[edit]

Latin Europe

Latin Europe, where the Romance languages are spoken. This area corresponds more or less to south-western Europe, with the exception of Romania and Moldova which are situated in Eastern Europe. The major religion is Catholicism, except in Romania and Moldova. This area consists of: Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Romania, Moldova, French-speaking Belgium and French speaking Switzerland, and Italian and Romansh speaking Switzerland as well.

[edit]

Slavic Europe

Slavic Europe, where Slavic languages are spoken. This area corresponds, more or less, to Central and Eastern Europe. The main religions are Orthodox Christianity and Catholicism, with large Muslim populations in some parts formerly ruled by the Ottoman Empire. This area consists of: Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

[edit]

Others

Outside of these three main groups we can find:

The Celtic nations: Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Cornwall (within the United Kingdom); the Isle of Man (a British Crown dependency); the Republic of Ireland; Brittany (within France). These are all nations where a Celtic language is spoken, or was spoken into modern times, and there is a degree of shared culture (see Pan Celticism). Also considered Celtic nations, by some, are both Galicia (Spain) and Asturias, (within Spain), whose own Celtic language died out several hundred years ago.

Greece, the only country of "Hellenic Europe". In Hellenic Europe we can consider also

the Greek Cypriot community It is sometimes associated with the Latin countries, due to the geographical and cultural ties to the Mediterranean Sea, and sometimes to the Slavic-Orthodox part of Europe due to the importance of Orthodoxy in Greece.

Armenia has a language that constitutes a separate branch of Indo-European family of languages. The Armenian language is spoken in Armenia and other European countries with Armenian communities (such as France, Greece, Belgium, Russia, Germany etc.). Ibero-Caucasian, a group that includes ethnic groups throughout the Caucasus region (both North and South). Ibero-Caucasian languages are not linked to the Indo-European languages. This group includes Georgians, Abkhaz, Chechens, Balkars, and a number of other smaller ethnic groups that reside in the Caucasus.

Turkey, having an Altaic language not of Indo-European origin, and mainly a Muslim country, unlike the main regions' different versions of Christianity.

Hungary, having a language related to Finnish and Estonian. Due to its location Hungary is normally grouped with Central or Eastern European countries.

Finland and Estonia, whose languages are related to Hungarian. Despite this connection (not a close one), Finland and Estonia are normally associated with northern European countries (of an even farther connection).

[edit]

See also

Eurasia

Culture of Europe

Economy of Europe

Geography of Europe

History of Europe

Politics of Europe

Transport in Europe

Eurozone

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Europium

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EUROPEstartpage.com, travel and city guide to Europe

LimitlessEurope.com : information guide to Europe

Europe at Night at NASA Earth Observatory

Regions of Europe

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EUFPC European Foreign Policy Council

Map of Europe

Physical Map of Europe

Parks in Europe - National parks, nature parks, reserves and other protected areas.

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Afrikaans

Alemannisch

Anglo Saxon

العربية

Aragonés

Armêneashti

Asturianu

Aymar

Български

Bân-lâm-gú

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বাংলা

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Чӱваш

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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotland>

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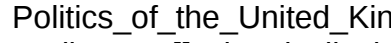
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 width=""170px"" | 90px |- | align=""center"" width=""170px"" | Flag_of_Scotland |
 align=""center"" width=""170px"" | Royal Arms of Scotland |} |- | align=""center"" colspan=2 |
 "Royal motto: Nemo_me_impune_lacessit
 (English: No one provokes me with impunity)
 (Scots: Wha daur meddle wi me)" |- | align=center colspan=2 style=""background: #ffffff;"
 | Image:LocationScotland.png |- | align=center colspan=2 style=""background: #ffffff;" |
 Image:Map_of_Scotland_within_the_United_Kingdom.png
 Scotland's location within the UK |- | ""Languages with Official Status""¹ | English
 Gaelic |- | ""Capital"" | Edinburgh |- | ""Largest city"" | Glasgow |- | ""First Minister"" |
 Jack_McConnell |- | ""Area""
 - Total
 - % water |Ranked 2nd UK
 78,782 km²
 1.9% |- | ""Population""
 - Total (2001)
 - Density |Ranked 2nd UK
 5,062,011
 64/km² |- | ""Establishment"" | Kenneth I of Scotland
 (Cináed mac Ailpín), 843 |- | ""Currency"" | Pound_sterling (£) (GBP) |- | ""Time_zone"" |
 UTC, Summer: UTC +1 |- | ""National anthem "" | "Flower_of_Scotland"
 "(de facto)"² |- | ""National_flower"" | Thistle |- | ""Patron_saint"" | St Andrew |- |
 ""Internet TLD"" | .uk3 |- | ""Calling Code"" | 444 |- | colspan=""2"| 1. Scots was officially
 recognised as a ""regional or minority language"" under the
 European_Charter_for_Regional_or_Minority_Languages, ratified by the
 United_Kingdom in 2001, but it still lacks the level of state support given to English and
 Gaelic.
 2. Since Scotland is part of the United Kingdom, "God_Save_the_Queen" is traditionally
 the national anthem. See national symbols below.
 3. In common with the rest of the UK.
 4. In common with the rest of the UK. |} {|Otheruses1|the country Scotland}} ""Scotland""
 ("Alba" in Gaelic) is a Nation in northwest Europe and a Constituent_country of the
 United_Kingdom. The name originally meant "Land of the Gaels" (see below). The
 country occupies the northern third of the Island of Great_Britain and shares a land
 border to the south with England and is bounded by the North_Sea on the east and the
 Atlantic_Ocean on the west. Its capital city is Edinburgh. Despite no longer being an
 independent sovereign state, Scotland is still considered a country in its own right.
 Scotland existed as an independent Kingdom until 1_May 1707, when the
 Act_of_Union_1707 merged Scotland with the Kingdom_of_England to create the
 Kingdom_of_Great_Britain. The Flag_of_Scotland — the Saltire — is thought to be the
 oldest national flag still in use. The Patron_saint of Scotland is Saint_Andrew, and
 Saint_Andrew's_Day is the 30_November. There are currently attempts to create an
 additional national holiday on this day. ===Etymology=== The English_language name

"Scotland" could date from at least the first half of the 10th century, when it was used in the Anglo-Saxon_Chronicle. The word "Scot-" was borrowed from Latin. We cannot assume "Scotland" was being used here to mean anything other than "Land of the Gaels", just like Latin "Scotia". Scottish kings adopted the title "Basileus"/"Rex Scottorum" (= "High King/King of the Gaels") and "Rex Scotiae" ("King of Gael-Land") some time in the 11th century. The earliest attribution of the latter Latin title was by the Germany-based Irish writer Marianus_Scotus, recording the death of King Máel Colum mac Cináeda as "Moelcolum Rex Scotiae", for the year 1034. In taking this title, they were likely influenced by the style "Imperator Scottorum" known to have been employed by Brian Bóruma in 1005. In the early 13th century, the Scotto-Norman author of "De_Situ_Albanie" protested that Scotia was a corrupt word for what should be called "Albania"; but by then "Scotia" was becoming the norm in Latin, French and English; and hence "Scotia" and its derivatives prevailed in all languages except the Celtic ones. The Kingdom_of_Scotland has traditionally been regarded as being united in 843, by "Cináed mac Ailpín", King of the Picts, the man who is known to the modern English-speaker as King Kenneth_I_of_Scotland. ==History== "See also the main article: History_of_Scotland." The written history of Scotland largely began with the arrival of the Roman_Empire in Britain, when the Romans occupied what is now England and Wales, administering it as a Roman_province called Britannia. To the north was territory not governed by the Romans—"Caledonia", peopled by the Picts. From a classical historical viewpoint Scotland seemed a peripheral country, slow to gain advances filtering out from the Mediterranean fount of civilisation, but as knowledge of the past increases it has become apparent that some developments were earlier and more advanced than previously thought, and that the seaways were very important to Scottish history. The country's lengthy struggle with England, its more powerful neighbour to the south, was the cause of the Wars_of_Scottish_Independence, forcing Scotland to rely on trade, cultural and often strategic ties with a number of European powers, most notably France. In these, the Scots repudiated the English king's assertions of paramountcy. They fought firstly under the Leadership of Sir William_Wallace and Andrew_de_Moray in support of John_Balliol, and later under that of Robert the Bruce. Bruce, crowned as King Robert I in 1306, won a decisive victory over the English at the Battle_of_Bannockburn in 1314. Image:RossScotLang1400.JPG From roughly the end of the 14th century, Scotland began to show a split into two cultural areas — the mainly Scots, or English, speaking Lowlands, and the mainly Gaelic-speaking Highlands. Gaelic persisted in remote parts of the southwest, which had formed part of the rival kingdom of Galloway during the early medieval period, probably up until the late 1700s. Historically, the Lowlands were closer to the mainstream European culture, and adopted a variant of the Feudal system after the Norman_Conquest of England. A number of major families of Norman ancestry, such as the Bruce, Douglas, and Stewart families, provided most of the monarchs after approximately 1100. By comparison, the clan system of the Highlands formed one of the region's more distinctive features, with a number of powerful clans remaining dominant until after the Act of Union. It is worth noting that the Western_Isles, along with Orkney and Shetland, were part of Norway until 1266 and 1468 respectively; the culture of these islands, in many ways, remained distinct from the rest of Scotland until the modern period. In 1603, the Scottish King James VI inherited the throne of England,

and became James I of England. James moved to London, only returning to Scotland once. Although he subsequently styled himself as the "King of Great Britain", this was a Personal union: the two nations shared a Head_of_state but remained separate kingdoms, with the exception of a brief period when Oliver_Cromwell overthrew the monarchy and Scotland was under English military occupation. In 1707, the Scottish and English Parliaments enacted the Acts of Union, which merged the Kingdom of Scotland with the Kingdom_of_England, creating the Kingdom_of_Great_Britain. The Union dissolved both the English and the Scottish Parliaments, and transferred all their powers to a new Parliament sitting in London which then became the Parliament of the United Kingdom. However, most of Scotland's institutions remained separate, notably the country's legal system and its established church; these distinctions remain to the present day. In 1801, Scotland became part of the United_Kingdom_of_Great_Britain_and_Ireland, when the Kingdom of Great Britain merged with the Kingdom_of_Ireland. Since 1922, Scotland has been one of the four Constituent_nations (along with England, Northern Ireland and Wales) of the United_Kingdom_of_Great_Britain_and_Northern_Ireland. In 1997 the people of Scotland voted to create a new devolved Scottish_Parliament, subsequently established by the UK government under the Scotland_Act_1998. Following the Act of Union and the subsequent Scottish_Enlightenment and Industrial_Revolution, Scotland became one of the commercial, intellectual and industrial powerhouses of Europe. Its industrial decline following the Second World War was particularly acute, but in recent decades the country has enjoyed something of a cultural and economic renaissance, fuelled in part by a resurgent Financial_services sector, the proceeds of North_Sea_oil and gas, and latterly the devolved parliament. ==Geography== Image:Scotland_map.png "Main article: Geography_of_Scotland." Scotland comprises the northern part of the island of Great Britain; it is bordered on the south by England. Scotland's territorial extent is generally that established by the 1237 Treaty_of_York between Scotland and England and the 1266_Treaty_of_Perth between Scotland and Norway. Exceptions include the Isle_of_Man, which is now a Crown_dependency outside the United Kingdom, Orkney and Shetland, which are Scottish rather than Norwegian, and Berwick-upon-Tweed, which was defined as subject to the laws of England by the 1746 Wales and Berwick Act. The country consists of a mainland area plus several island groups, including Shetland, Orkney, and the Hebrides, divided into the Inner_Hebrides and Outer_Hebrides. Three main geographical and geological areas make up the mainland: from north to south, the generally mountainous Highlands containing Ben_Nevis, Britain's highest Mountain, the low-lying Central_Belt, and the hilly Southern_Uplands. The majority of the Scottish population resides in the Central Belt, which contains three of the country's six largest cities (Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Stirling) and many large towns. Most of the remaining population lives in the North-East Lowlands, where two of the remaining three cities (Aberdeen and Dundee) are situated. The final city, Inverness, is situated where the River_Ness meets the Moray_Firth, on the Great_Glen_Fault between the North-West Highlands and the Cairngorms. ""Highest maximum temperature"": 32.9°C (91.2°F) at Greycrook, near Newtown_St._Boswells, Borders on 9_August 2003. ""Lowest minimum temperature"": -27.2°C (-17.0°F) at Braemar, Aberdeenshire on 11_February 1895 and 10_January 1982 and at Altnaharra, Highland on 30_December 1995.

<http://www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/location/scotland/#temperature> ===Major cities===
The six designated cities in descending order of population size: * Glasgow * Edinburgh, the capital * Aberdeen * Dundee * Inverness * Stirling Scottish towns: *
List_of_burghs_in_Scotland ===Waterways=== * Major Rivers: ** The Clyde, The Dee, The Don, The Forth, The Tay, The Tweed, The Spey, ... * Firths: ** Solway, Clyde, Cromarty, Dornoch, Forth, Lorne, Moray, Tay * Sea Lochs (Fjords): ** Loch_Linnhe, Loch_Fyne, Loch_Long, Loch_Etive, Loch_Sunart, Loch_Nevis, Loch_Hourn, Loch_Broom, Loch_Eil * Freshwater Lochs (lakes) include: ** Loch_Ness, Loch_Lomond, Loch_Morar, Loch_Tay, Loch_Rannoch, Loch_Awe, Loch_Shiel, Loch_Maree, The Lake_of_Menteith * Artificial & Enhanced waterways include: ** Caledonian_Canal, Crinan_Canal, Forth_and_Clyde_Canal, Union Canal *** See Also Falkirk_Wheel ==Geology== {{main|Geology of Scotland}} When Vulcanism actively occurred in East_Lothian, 350 million years ago, the rocks which now comprise Scotland lay close to the equator, and formed part of the newly amalgamated supercontinent of Pangaea. The continental plates making up Pangaea continued to converge, and a major collision occurred with the continent of Gondwana. The northern and southern parts of the island of Great Britain became adjoined only 75 million years before the onset of vulcanism in East Lothian. Before then, Scotland lay on the margin of the Laurentian continent, which included North_America and Greenland. England and Wales lay some 40° of latitude further south, adjacent to Africa and South_America in the Gondwanan continent. In the Early Ordovician, approximately 475 million years ago, England and Wales, on the Avalonian plate, rifted away from Gondwana and drifted northward towards Laurentia. The Iapetus_Ocean, which separated the two land masses, began to close. By the mid-Silurian, about 420 million years ago, its margins had become attached along the Iapetus Suture, which roughly follows a line running West to East from the Solway_Firth to Northumberland. When the later episode of vulcanism occurred, approximately 270 million years ago, Scotland still comprised part of Pangaea, but had drifted northward. East Lothian stood at about 8°North. Consolidation of Pangaea had continued so that the nearest ocean, the Tethys seaway, lay between Eurasia and Africa. Siccar Point in Berwickshire, Scotland, is where James Hutton (the "father" of modern geology) first observed this classic unconformity and recognized the meaning of stratigraphy. ==Government and politics==
===Government=== As one of the constituent parts of the United Kingdom, Scotland is represented in the Parliament_of_the_United_Kingdom in London. The Scottish_Parliament in Edinburgh has the power to govern the country on Scotland-specific matters and has a limited power to vary income tax. The United Kingdom Parliament retains responsibility for Scotland's defence, international relations and certain other areas. The Scottish Parliament is not a sovereign authority, and the UK Parliament could, in theory, overrule or even abolish it at any time. For the purposes of local government, Scotland is divided into 32 unitary authority districts. Popular folk-memory continues to divide Scotland into 33 traditional counties. ===Head of state=== [[Image:Scottish_royal_coat_of_arms.png|thumb|right|200px|The [[Royal_Coat_of_Arms_of_the_United_Kingdom (for use in Scotland)|Royal Coat of Arms of the United Kingdom, as used in Scotland]] by Elizabeth_II_of_the_United_Kingdom]] Queen Elizabeth II, Head_of_state of the United_Kingdom, is descended from King James_VI, King_of_Scots, the first Scottish

Monarch to also be King_of_England (James I, King of England from 1603). While great controversy has simmered amongst the Scottish public over her official title since her Coronation (many believe that, being the first Queen Elizabeth of Great_Britain, she should use the Regnal_name "Elizabeth I"), the courts of Scotland have confirmed "Elizabeth II" as her official title. She has said that in the future monarchs will follow the international ordinal tradition that, where a monarch reigns in a number of non-independent territories (or independent territories that agree to share a monarch) that each have a differing number of previous monarchs of the same name, the highest ordinal used in any of the territories is the one used across all (see List_of_regnal_numerals_of_future_British_monarchs). Monarchs between 1603 and 1707, such as James VI and I and James_VII_and_II, reigned over separate States and hence used a dual ordinal (see Personal_union). Properly, the Scottish monarch was known as "King of Scots" or "Queen of Scots", and referred to as "your Grace", rather than "your Majesty". ===Scots_Law=== Scotland retains its own unique legal system, based on Roman_law, which combines features of both civil law and Common_law. The terms of union with England specified the retention of separate systems. The barristers being called advocates, and the judges of the high court for civil cases are also the judges for the high court for criminal cases. Scots_Law differs from England's Common_law system. Formerly, there were several regional law systems in Scotland, one of which was Udal_Law (also called "allodail" or "odal law") in Shetland and Orkney. This was a direct descendant of Old Norse Law, but was abolished in 1611. Despite this, Scottish courts have acknowledged the supremacy of udal law in some property cases as recently as the 1990s. There is a movement to restore udal law <http://www.udallaw.com/> to the islands as part of a devolution of power from Edinburgh to Shetland and Orkney. The laws regarding the nobility are also different in Scotland. Lords known as "Barons" in England are known as "Lords of Parliament." Gentlemen known as "Barons" in Scotland are not members of the House_of_Lords, as their titles (although still legitimate) are based on the old system of Feudal baronies. Various systems based on common Celtic or Brehon_Laws also survived in the Highlands until the 1800s. ===Politics=== "See main article: Politics_of_Scotland, also Politics_of_the_United_Kingdom" Image:NewScottishParliament-750.jpg Scottish Parliament.]] Historically the politics of Scotland have reflected those of the UK as a whole, although with some differences. For example, besides the main UK-wide political parties (Labour, Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats) a number of Scottish-specific parties operate. These include the Scottish_National_Party (SNP) which is Scotland's second largest party and forms the main opposition in Parliament to the Labour-Liberal_Democrats coalition, as well as the Scottish_Socialist_Party (SSP) and the Scottish_Green_Party. These parties became more of a force in Scottish politics after the establishment of the Scottish_Parliament in 1998. Unlike England, which has a more of a left/right split politically, the political right in Scotland is actually amongst the smallest political groupings with the four main Parties all coming from a mix of far-left to moderate-left philosophies. The traditional political divides of left and right have also intersected with arguments over Devolution, which all the UK-wide parties have supported to some degree throughout their history (although both Labour and the Conservatives have swithered a number of times between supporting and opposing it). However, now that devolution has occurred, the main argument about

Scotland's constitutional status remains between those who support Scottish independence and those who oppose it. Recent trends indicate, according to the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust "State of the Nation Poll" 2004, that 66% of Scots would like the Scottish Parliament to have more powers, while only 2% would like to see the powers returned to the House of Commons and Whitehall, with 21% happy with the "Status quo".

==Language== Scotland has three distinct languages: English, Gaelic, and Scots. Almost all Scots speak Scottish Standard English. It is estimated by the General Register Office for Scotland that 30% of the population are also fluent in Scots, a West Germanic language sister to the English language. Slightly more than 1% of the population are native Gaelic speakers, a Celtic language similar to Irish. Eilean Siar is the only unitary council region of Scotland where Gaelic is spoken by a majority of the population and that fact is reflected in the use of Gaelic in its official name. Almost all Gaelic speakers also speak fluent English. By the time of James VI's accession to the English throne, the old Scottish Court and Parliament spoke and wrote in Scots, also known as Lowland Scots or Lallans (although strictly speaking Lallans is a literary dialect of the Scots language). Scots is widely believed to have developed from the Northumbrian form of Anglo-Saxon, spoken in Bernicia which, in the 6th century, conquered the Brythonic kingdom of Gododdin (modern-day Lothian) and renamed its capital, Dunedin, to Edinburgh. The influence of settlers from the Low Countries and Norway in the east coast burghs founded from the reign of David I onwards was also an important factor in the development of the language, however. Scots contains a number of loanwords from Gaelic. Equally, there is a strong movement in the Aberdeen area to have Doric, the dialect of Scots spoken around Aberdeen, recognised as a language. In addition, there is a movement to revive Norn, a dialect of Old Norse which died out in the 19th century, on Orkney and Shetland. Town names on signs in Shetland are written in both languages. The Scottish Parliament recognises both English and Gaelic as official languages of Scotland, both receiving "equal respect" although not equal validity. Gaelic received official recognition through the "Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005". The Scots language was also officially recognised as a "regional or minority language" under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages ratified by the United Kingdom in 2001, and the Scottish Executive, has promised to provide support in their "Partnership Agreement" 2003. The Scottish Language Dictionaries receive some state funding via the Scottish Arts Council.

==Culture== "Main article: Culture of Scotland" Scotland has a civic and ethnic culture distinct from that of the rest of the British Isles. It originates from various differences, some entrenched as part of the Act of Union, others facets of nationhood not readily defined but readily identifiable.

===Scottish education=== The system of Education in Scotland is also separate, and has a distinctive history as the first country since Sparta in classical Greece to implement a system of general Public education. The early roots were in the Education Act of 1496 which first introduced compulsory education for the eldest sons of nobles, then the principle of general public education was set with the Reformation establishment of the national Kirk which in 1561 set out a national programme for spiritual reform, including a school in every parish. In 1633 the Parliament of Scotland introduced a tax on local landowners to fund this, subsequently strengthened with the Education Act of 1696 which remained in force until 1872. The Act of Union guaranteed

the rights of the Scottish universities and confirmed the position of the Kirk, maintaining Scotland's pre-eminence in public education. Education finally came under the control of the state rather than the Kirk and became compulsory for all children from the implementation of the Education Act of 1872 onwards. As a result, for over two hundred years Scotland had a higher percentage of its population educated at primary, secondary and tertiary levels than any other country in Europe. The differences in education have manifested themselves in different ways, but most noticeably in the number of Scots who went on to become leaders in their fields during the 18th and 19th centuries. The then-Deputy First Minister Jim_Wallace stated in October 2004 that Scotland still produces a higher number of university and college graduates per head than anywhere else in Europe. School students in Scotland sit Standard_Grade exams while students in England sit GCSE exams, and then a broad range of Higher_Grade exams rather than becoming more specialised under the English A-level system. Following this, a Scottish university's honours degree takes four years of study as opposed to three in the rest of the UK. The university systems in several Commonwealth countries show marked affinities with the Scottish rather than the English system. ===Banking and currency=== Finance in Scotland also features unique characteristics. Although the Bank_of_England remains the central bank for the UK Government, three Scottish corporate banks still issue their own Banknotes: (the Bank_of_Scotland, the Royal_Bank_of_Scotland and the Clydesdale_Bank). These notes have no status as Legal_tender in England, Wales or Northern Ireland; but in practice they are universally accepted throughout the UK (including in Northern Ireland, where Irish banks also issue their own banknotes), as well as in the Isle_of_Man and the Channel_Islands). The Royal Bank of Scotland still produces a £1 note, unique amongst British banks. The full range of notes commonly accepted are £1, £5, £10, £20, £50 and £100. Bank of England currency is also accepted as legal currency in Scotland. (See British_banknotes for further discussion) The only Legal_tender, by a strict definition, in Scotland is coinage of the Royal Mint (including gold); by statute, Bank of England notes below the value of £5 are legal tender, but none are currently circulating. No Bank of England notes in use, or any of the Scottish banknotes, are legal tender in Scotland. In practice this has little effect, as creditors are obliged to accept any "reasonable" attempt to settle a debt under Scots law. All four sets of banknotes are freely accepted in Scotland, and can be considered legal currency, though it is unusual for notes over £20 to be used in normal business. The Pound_Scots, which ceased being used with the Act of Union, is still sometimes invoked. Originally the same value as the pound sterling, today it is treated as being worth one-twelfth of a pound sterling, or eight and a third pence, the value it had in 1707. It only exists in a legal sense; generally in archaic laws or bequests, with values given either in pounds Scots or in Merks, another archaic unit of currency. The merk, or mark, was worth around thirteen or fourteen shillings Scots — just over one English Shilling. Both the Bank of Scotland and the Bank of England were founded by William Paterson of Dumfries. In addition the modern system of branch banking (in which banks maintain a nationwide system of offices rather than one or two central offices) originated in Scotland. Only strong political pressure during the 19th century prevented the resultant strong banking system from taking over banking in England. However, although Scottish banks proved unwelcome in England at the time, their Business_model became widely copied, firstly in England

and later in the rest of the world. The Savings Bank movement was created in Scotland in 1810 by the Reverend Henry_Duncan as a means of allowing his parishioners to save smaller amounts of money than the major banks would accept as deposits at that time. His model for the Ruthwell Parish Bank was adopted by well-to-do sponsors throughout the world, with most of the British savings banks eventually amalgamating to form the Trustee_Savings_Bank - more recently merged with the commercial bank, Lloyds_Bank, to form Lloyds_TSB - and the American examples becoming a Savings_and_Loan_Association. See <http://www.savingsbanksmuseum.co.uk/> for further information. ===Sport=== Image:Murrayfield.jpg Scotland also has its own sporting Competitions distinct from the rest of the UK, such as the Scottish_Football_League and the Scottish_Rugby_Union. This gives the country independent representation at many international sporting events such as the football World Cup and various rugby tournaments such as the Six Nations. Scotland cannot compete in the Olympic_Games independently however, and Scottish athletes must compete as part of the Great Britain team if they wish to take part. Scotland does however send its own team to compete in the Commonwealth_Games. Association Football is the most popular sport in the country, both played and watched. Innovations such as a passing style of play, a team working as a unit, Half-time and Free-kicks were introduced by Queen's_Park_F.C., all of which were later incorporated and remain in the modern game. Their Hampden_Park home, the world's first and oldest international football stadium, holds several European attendance records including 149,415 watching a Scottish international. The Scottish_Football_Association is the second oldest national football association in the world, with the Scottish_national_football_team playing and hosting the world's first ever international football match. The Scottish_Cup is the world's oldest national trophy. The oldest professional football club in Scotland is Kilmarnock_FC, founded in 1869. Scotland is considered the "Home of Golf", and is well known for its many courses, including the Old Course that is synonymous with the game. Established in 1754, The_Royal_and_Ancient_Golf_Club_of_St_Andrews also codified the rules of golf. As well as its world famous Highland_Games, where several traditional events such as the McGlashan stones are now common in world strongman events, Scotland has also given the world Curling, and Shinty, a stick game related to Ireland's Hurling, and similar to England's Field_hockey. Whilst stereotypically seen as an English game, Scottish_cricket has always had a large following throughout the country. Image:CabersGlasgow.jpg Scottish professional rugby clubs compete in the Celtic League, along with teams from Ireland and Wales. However, the country retains a national league for amateur and semi-pro clubs. Shinty is run by the Camanachd_Association and is played primarily in its Highland heartland, but also in most universities and cities. Kingussie have the distinction of appearing in the Guinness_Book_of_Records as the most successful sporting team of all time, having won the league for twenty years in a row. ===Media=== Scotland has distinct media from the rest of the UK. For example, it produces many national newspapers such as Daily_Record (Scotland's leading Tabloid), "The Herald" Broadsheet, based in Glasgow, and "The_Scotsman" in Edinburgh. "The Herald", formerly known as the "Glasgow Herald", changed its name to promote a national rather than a regional identity, while "The Scotsman", which used to be a broadsheet, recently switched to

tabloid format. Sunday newspapers include the tabloid "Sunday Mail" (published by "Daily Record" parent company Trinity Mirror) and the "Sunday Post", while the "Sunday Herald" and "Scotland on Sunday" have associations with "The Herald" and "The Scotsman" respectively. Regional dailies include "The Courier and Advertiser" in Dundee in the east, and "The Press and Journal" serving Aberdeen and the north. Scotland has its own BBC services which include the national radio stations, "BBC Radio Scotland" and Gaelic language service, "BBC Radio nan Gaidheal". There are also a number of BBC and independent local radio stations throughout the country. In addition to radio, BBC Scotland also runs two national television stations. Much of the output of BBC Scotland Television, such as news and current affairs programmes, and the Glasgow-based soap opera, "River City", are intended for broadcast within Scotland, whilst others, such as drama and comedy programmes, aim at audiences throughout the UK and further afield. Sports coverage also differs, reflecting the fact that the country has its own football leagues, separate from those of England. Three independent television stations ("Scottish TV", "Grampian TV" and "ITV1 Border") also broadcast in Scotland. Although they previously had independent existences, "Scottish TV" (serving the Central Lowlands) and "Grampian" (serving the Highlands and Islands) now belong to the same company (The Scottish Media Group) and resemble each other closely, apart from local news coverage. English-based "ITV1 Border" has had a more complex position, as it serves communities on both sides of the border with England, as well as the Isle of Man, and it now has separate news programs for each side of the border. Most of the independent television output equates to that transmitted in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with the exception of news and current affairs, sport, cultural and Gaelic language programming. ===Other facets of Scottish culture=== Image:Wfm_holyrood_palace.jpg Scotland retains its own distinct sense of nationhood. Academic research consistently shows that people in Scotland feel Scottish, whilst not necessarily feeling the need to see that translated into the establishment of a fully-independent Scottish nation-state. Scotland also has its own unique family of languages and dialects, helping to foster a strong sense of "Scottish-ness". See Scots_language and Scottish_Gaelic_language. An organisation called Iomairt Cholm Cille (<http://www.colmcille.net>) has been set up to support Gaelic-speaking communities in both Scotland and Ireland and to promote links between them. Scotland retains its own national church, separate from that of England. See Church_of_Scotland and the section on "Religion" below. These factors combine together to form a strong, readily identifiable Scottish civic culture. ==Religion== The Church_of_Scotland (sometimes referred to as "The Kirk") is the national church, but it is not subject to state control nor is it "established" in the same manner as the Church of England within England. It is, however, recognised as the national church by Act of Parliament - Church_of_Scotland_Act_1921. The Church of Scotland differs from the Church_of_England in several key respects, most notably in terms of not having a prescriptive liturgy and also in that it has a Presbyterian rather than Episcopalian form of church governance. Presbyterian church government was guaranteed by the Act of Union in 1707. The Scots are proud of the fact that the Scottish_Reformation took place at a grassroots level, unlike the English experience, where the reformation, at least in its first thrust under Henry VIII, was a politically motivated top-down reform. {} border="2" cellpadding="5" cellspacing="0" style="width:300px; float:right; clear:right;" |+ ""Figures

Religion	Percentage of Population
Church of Scotland	42%
No Religion	28%
Roman Catholic	16%
Other Christian	7%
No Answer	5%
Islam	0.8%
Buddhism	0.1%
Sikhism	0.1%
Judaism	0.1%
Hinduism	0.1%
Other Religions	0.5%

The Scottish Reformation, initiated in 1560 and led by John_Knox, was Calvinist, and throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the Church_of_Scotland maintained a strict theology and kept a tight control over the morality of the population. The Church had an overwhelming influence on the cultural development of Scotland in early modern times. Because Calvinism does not adhere to the Liturgical_Year, for example, Christmas was not widely celebrated in Scotland until the mid-20th century. The intellectual nature of Calvinism contributed greatly to the predominance of Scottish thinkers in the Age_of_Enlightenment (see Scottish_Enlightenment), but the Church's distrust of the sensual is seen as the reason why Scotland contributed little to classical music and art before the 19th century. Since the mid-19th century, however, the Church of Scotland has developed into a generally tolerant and heterogenous church with an interest in Ecumenism. A number of other Christian denominations exist in Scotland, foremost amongst them Roman Catholicism, which survived the reformation especially on islands like Uist and Barra despite the suppression of the 16th to late 18th centuries, and was strengthened in the 19th_century by Immigration from Ireland. It has now become the largest Christian denomination after the Church of Scotland, and is strongest in the West of Scotland (although roadside Shrines can be seen in the South Isles of the Outer Hebrides, similar to those in Ireland). Much of Scotland (particularly the West Central Belt around Glasgow) has experienced problems caused by the religious divide between Presbyterians and Roman Catholics. Some Scots maintain that Sectarianism is still deeply rooted in Scottish society. This problem has historically manifested itself in a number of ways, particularly in Discrimination in employment and in football fanaticism. The problems associated with sectarianism in Scotland have diminished markedly in recent years, although some issues remain. The Scottish police have recently moved to restrict the number of Orange Order parades and the state funding of separate Roman Catholic primary and secondary schools remains a controversial issue. As well as the Church of Scotland there are various other Protestant churches, including the Scottish_Episcopal_Church, which forms a full part of the Anglican Communion, and the Free_Church_of_Scotland, a Presbyterian off-shoot from the Church of Scotland adhering to a more conservative style of Calvinism. Islam is the largest non-Christian Religion in Scotland, although its numbers remain small. There are also significant Jewish (though higher in past decades) and Sikh communities, especially in Glasgow (Nancy_Morris is Scotland's first woman Rabbi). Scotland has a high proportion of

persons who regard themselves as belonging to 'no religion'. Indeed, this was the second most common response in the 2001 census. ==Economy== "Main article: Economy_of_Scotland" {{align=right | Image:Wfm_glasgow_cityhall.jpg in Glasgow}} Most Scottish industry and commerce is concentrated in a few large cities on the waterways of the central lowlands. Edinburgh, on the Firth_of_Forth, is a cultural centre, the capital of Scotland, and one of the top financial centres in Europe. Glasgow, one of the largest cities in the UK, lies on the River_Clyde; it is Scotland's leading seaport and today is the fourth largest manufacturing centre in the UK, accounting for well over 60% of Scotland's manufactured exports, with particular strengths in shipbuilding, engineering, food and drink, printing, publishing, clothing and textiles as well as new growth sectors such as software development and biotechnology. The dominant sector of Glasgow's economy is the service sector industries such as finance and banking, public administration, education, healthcare, and tourism. Glasgow is one of Europe's top 20 financial centres and is home to many of Britain's leading businesses. Glasgow also has the UK's largest and most economically important commerce and retail district. Although heavy industry has declined, the high-technology Silicon_Glen corridor has developed between Glasgow and Edinburgh. Tourism is also very important. The significance of coal, once Scotland's most important mineral resource, has declined. Oil, however, gained prominence in Scotland's economy during the 1970s, with the growth of North_Sea oil extraction companies. Natural gas is also abundant in the North Sea fields. Aberdeen is the centre of the oil industry. Scotland is a net exporter of energy to the rest of the UK, with abundant electricity generation capacity. Other important industries are textile production (woollens, worsteds, silks, and linens), distilling, and fishing. Textiles, beer, and whisky, which are among Scotland's chief exports, are produced in many towns. Salmon are taken from the Tay and the Dee, and numerous coastal towns and villages are supported by fishing from the North Sea. Only about one quarter of the land is under cultivation (principally in cereals and vegetables), but sheep raising is important in the less arable mountainous regions. Because of the persistence of feudalism and the land enclosures of the 19th cent. (see History, below), the ownership of most land in Scotland is concentrated in relatively few hands (some 350 people own about half the land). In 2003, as a result, the Scottish Parliament passed a land reform act that empowered tenant farmers and communities to purchase land even if the landlord did not want to sell. ==National symbols== *The Flag_of_Scotland dates from the 9th century making it one of the oldest flags in the world. It now forms part of the Union_Flag, the national flag of the United Kingdom. However the Flag of Scotland, known as the "Saltire" or "St Andrew's Cross" can be found flying all over Scotland. *The Royal_Standard_of_Scotland, a banner showing the old royal arms of the Kings of Scotland is also frequently to be seen, particularly at sporting events involving a Scottish team. Often called "the lion rampant" (after its chief heraldic device), it is the property of the Queen and its use by anybody else is technically illegal. The banner is flown from Holyrood_Palace and Balmoral_Castle when the Queen is not in residence. *The Unicorn is also used as a symbol of Scotland. The Royal_Coat_of_Arms_of_Scotland, used prior to 1603 by the Kings of Scotland, incorporated a lion rampant shield supported by two unicorns. On the union of the crowns, the Arms were quartered with those of England and Ireland, and one unicorn was replaced by a lion (the supporters of England). *The Thistle, the national flower of Scotland, features in many Scottish

symbols and logos, and UK currency. According to one common legend, a Danish attacker stepped on one at night, so alerting the defenders of a Scottish castle; hence it is called the "guardian thistle". **"Flower_of_Scotland"** is popularly held to be the National_anthem of Scotland, but as Scotland remains part of the United Kingdom, **"God_Save_the_Queen"** legally is the national anthem, despite containing the line **"Rebellious Scots to crush"** in the 6th verse. This being one of the reasons the Scots prefer their own anthem. At sporting events over the years, the role of the nation's anthem has been filled by various patriotic songs, including "Flower of Scotland", **"Scotland_the_Brave"** and **"Scots_Wha_Hae"**. In the 1990s, one of the country's leading tabloid newspapers conducted a poll to determine which song should be classed as Scotland's anthem. "Flower of Scotland" won and is now used as the de facto national anthem at international sporting events, although there are those who still consider the other songs as having equal validity.

==Scottish Inventions== Inventors, Scottish by birth or residence, have played prominent parts in such important inventions and discoveries as Watt's Steam_engine, Macleod with Insulin, McAdam's Macadam roads, Thomson and Dunlop with the Pneumatic_tyre, Bell's telephone, Baird's Television, Robert_Watson-Watt's Radar, and James_Chalmers' invention of the Postage_stamp. Alexander_Fleming's discovery of Penicillin and James_Young_Simpson's pioneering developments in Anaesthesia were two of the most important breakthroughs in modern medicine. John_Napier contributed Napier's_bones and Natural_logarithms, Adam_Smith helped to create modern Economics, and the popular sport of Golf is usually regarded as a Scottish invention. Scotland's iconic claims to fame include:

==Miscellaneous==

- ===Animals===** * Dolly_the_sheep * Highland_cattle * Nessie, the Loch Ness monster * Wild_Haggis * Golden_Retriever * Scottish_Terrier
- ===Celebrations===** * Burns night (25 January) * Hogmanay (New Year's Eve) * Tartan_Day (6 April - celebrated in North America but not normally in Scotland itself) * Saint_Andrew's Day (30 November — has been championed by some in recent years after having declined greatly in importance after the Reformation)
- ===Clothing and dress===** * Kilts * Mackintosh * Tartan * Tweed, especially Harris_Tweed * Tam_o'shanter
- ===Comic books and characters===** * The_Beano * The_Broons * The_Dandy * Oor_Wullie
- ===Drink===** * Highland_Spring * Irn-Bru * Limeade * Scotch_whisky and its distilleries * Tizer
- ===Food===** * Black, red and White_pudding * Deep_fried_Mars_bar * Digestive_biscuit * Haggis * Oatcakes * Porridge * Scots_tablet * Shortbread * Smoked_Salmon * Selkirk_Bannock
- ===Lifestyle===** * Automatic_teller_machine * Postage_Stamp * Tarmac * Telephone * Television * Pedal Bicycle * Pneumatic tire
- ===Music===** * Bagpipes * Scottish country dancing
- ===Famous Scots===** see List_of_Scots
- ===Places===** * Loch_Ness * Scottish_Highlands (Aviemore, Cairngorms, Munros) and islands (Hebrides, Orkney, Shetland) * Edinburgh * Glasgow * Loch_Lomond * Scottish_Borders
- ===Other===** * Cutty_Sark * Scottish_sundial — the renaissance sundials of Scotland.

==See also==

- {{portal}}** **{{Commonscat|Scotland}}** * **{{wikitravel}}** * Transport_in_Scotland * Timeline_of_Scottish_history * Caledonia * List_of_not_fully_sovereign_nations * Subdivisions_of_Scotland * National_parks_(Scotland) * Traditional_music_of_Scotland * Flower_of_Scotland * Wars_of_Scottish_Independence * National_Trust_for_Scotland * Historic_houses_in_Scotland * Castles_in_Scotland * Museums_in_Scotland * Abbeys_and_priories_in_Scotland * Gardens_in_Scotland *

[List_of_Universities_in_Scotland](#) * [List_of_Scots](#) * [List_of_Scottish_writers](#) *
[Scottish_Term_Day](#) * [List_of_United_Kingdom_topics](#) * [List_of_Monarchs_of_Scotland](#)
[* Scottish_monarchs_family_tree](#) * [List_of_British_monarchs](#) *
[Flags_of_non-sovereign_nations](#) ==References== {{unsourced}} ==External links== *
[Scottish Executive](#) - official site of the Scottish Executive * [Scottish Parliament](#) - official
site of The Scottish Parliament * [BBC Scotland](#) - Scottish history, news and travel pages
from BBC * [The Gazetteer for Scotland](#) - Extensive guide to the places and people of
Scotland, by the [Royal Scottish Geographical Society](#) and [University of Edinburgh](#)
*[Scottish Clans Directory](#):Scottish Clans and family history sites directory * [Scotland](#)
[Directory](#) - comprehensive directory of sites focused on Scotland * [Scotland's People](#) -
official government source for Scottish genealogy * [Scottish Census Results On Line](#) -
official government site for Scotland's census results * [Scottish Neighbourhood](#)
[Statistics](#) - Scottish Executive's programme of small area statistics in Scotland * [Scottish](#)
[Tourist Board](#) - official site of Scotland's national tourist board {{Constituent Countries
and Nations of the UK}} Category:[European_countries](#) Category:[Monarchies](#)
Category:[NUTS_1_Statistical_Regions_of_Europe](#) Als:[Schottland](#) Ang:[Scotland](#)
Ar:[أسكتلندا](#) Ast:[Escocia](#) Bg:[Шотландия](#) Ca:[Escòcia](#) Cs:[Skotsko](#) Cy:[Yr Alban](#) Da:[Skotland](#)
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Sv:[Skottland](#) Uk:[Шотландія](#) Zh:[蘇格蘭](#)

<http://www.wikiverse.org/initiation>

1 capture

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2004 2005 2006

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[Initiation](#)

[In the news](#)

[Deerfield sends 'scam' warning based on e-mail](#)

[Cincinnati.com, OH -](#)

... Shortly after the message about the gang initiation rite was publicized to local media and posted on the Deerfield Township Web site, Warren County Sheriff's ...

[AirNet Systems, Inc. Announces Initiation of Marketing Process](#)

[Yahoo News \(press release\) -](#)

[COLUMBUS, Ohio, May 4 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- AirNet Systems, Inc. \(NYSE: ANS - News\) today announced that the Board of Directors ...](#)

[CABG Medical Announces Initiation of CE Mark Clinical Trial](#)

Yahoo News (press release) -

MINNEAPOLIS, May 3 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- CABG Medical, Inc. (Nasdaq: CABG - News) today announced the initiation of enrollment in its clinical trial for CE ...

Bizarre News US Uni Shoots Students As Part Of Initiation Ceremony

FemaleFirst.co.uk, UK -

A US fraternity house has been shut down after a student was repeatedly shot as part of an initiation ritual. The boy was taking ...

Initiation Gold Rush AT GSJB Were

Australasian Investment review (subscription), Australia -

GSJB Were has initiated coverage on three small gold companies all operating in Victoria's Bendigo/Ballarat region. Of the three ...

Coming from the Latin, initiation implies a beginning. The related term, initiate, means to begin or start a particular action, event, circumstance, or happening. But it is also an ending as existence on one level drops away in an ascension to the next.

An initiation is also a ceremony by which a person is introduced into a society, or other organized body, especially the rite of admission into a secret society or order.

Normally an initiation rite would imply a shepherding process where those who are at a higher level guide the initiate through a process of greater exposure of knowledge. This may include the revelation of secrets, usually reserved for those at the higher level of understanding.

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_All_Worlds

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About this capture

The "'Church of All Worlds'" (CAW) is a religious group whose stated mission is to evolve a network of information, mythology, and experience that provides a context and stimulus for re-awakening Gaia, and re-uniting her children through tribal community dedicated to responsible stewardship and evolving consciousness. In 1962, CAW evolved from a group of friends and lovers who were in part inspired by religion of the same name from the science fiction novel "Stranger_in_a_Strange_Land" by Robert_A._Heinlein. {{reli-stub}} ==External links== *Church of All Worlds *Church of All Worlds: A Brief History from "The Pagan Library" Category:New_religious_movements Category:Fictional_religions

<http://www.wikiverse.org/celtic-disambiguation>

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Celtic Disambiguation

The word Celtic can refer to:

the European Celtic people

Celtic Football Club of Glasgow, Scotland

a type of stone tool

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Celt

In the news

New Elliott movie charts magic mushroom odyssey

Ireland Online, Ireland -

The latest film from the creator of Man About Dog and The Mighty Celt looks set to be a road trip with a difference. Pearse Elliott ...

Celt will do it his way and pay price

Glasgow Evening Times, UK -

STEPHEN McMANUS will not change his style of play - despite being just one game away from suspension. With Bobo Balde heading off ...

LAMBERT LOAN BID FOR CELT AGATHE

Glasgow Daily Record, UK -

By Hugh Keevins. PAUL Lambert is trying to get his old Celtic team-mates Didier Agathe and Stephen Pearson in Livingston shirts. ...

HIGHEST PAID CELT OF ALL TIME But fans wait for deal

Glasgow Daily Record, UK -

By Anthony Haggerty. CELTIC'S fans were last night kept in the dark over the arrival of Roy Keane. But the Parkhead club remain certain ...

HIGHEST PAID CELT OF ALL TIME

Glasgow Daily Record, UK -

By Anthony Haggerty. CELTIC'S fans were kept in the dark over Roy Keane last night but the Parkhead club remain certain the Irishman ...

This page is about the European Celtic peoples, for the tool known as a celt see celt (tool)

In ancient times the Celts were a number of interrelated peoples in central Europe sharing many cultural and linguistic traits indicative of a common origin. Today, "Celtic" is often used in to describe the people and their respective cultures and languages of several ethnic groups in the British Isles, the French region of Brittany and the Spanish region of Galicia who also share many of the same common traits in their cultures and languages as the original Celts but who in ancient times were not necessarily considered related to them by outsiders (tribes or nations from mainland Celtic regions, such as Gaul and Belgium, are known to have moved into Britain and Ireland, such as the Atrebates, Menapii, and Parisi, however, and contributed to the make up of those peoples).

The first literary reference to the Celtic people, as keltai or hidden people, is by the Greek Hecataeus in 517 BC.

"Celt" is pronounced /kelt/, and "celtic" as /keltɪk/ (in SAMPA). The pronunciation /seltɪk/ should only be used for certain sports teams (eg. the NBA team, Boston Celtics, and the SFA side, Celtic FC).

The term 'Celt' or 'Celtic' can be used in several senses - it can denote a group of peoples speaking or descended from speakers of the Celtic Language; or the people of prehistoric Europe who share common cultural traits which are thought to have originated in the Hallstatt and La Tene Cultures. In contemporary terms 'Celtic nations'

are usually defined as Wales, Ireland, Scotland, Cornwall, Isle of Man and Brittany due to Celtic languages unique to these areas. Other areas of Europe are associated with being Celtic, such as Galicia and England (particularly Devon and Cumbria). Modern day DNA research (such as that by University College London) indicate that the current population of England is primarily descended from Celtic/ancient British ancestry, although England lacks a surviving common Celtic language. Similarly in Scotland, the Gaelic language is restricted mostly to the northern and western fringes.

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1 The Origins and Geographical Distribution of the Celts

2 New Theories of Celtic Origins in Britain

3 Celts conquered by the Romans

4 Celts pushed west by Germanic Migration

5 Celtic Social System and Arts

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7.3 The word "Welsh"

7.4 The name "Celts"

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The Origins and Geographical Distribution of the Celts

The Urnfield people were the largest population grouping in late Bronze Age Europe and were preeminent from c. 1200 BC until the emergence of the Celts in c. 600 BC. The period of the Urnfield people saw a dramatic increase in population probably due to innovations in technology and agricultural practices. The spread of iron-working led to the development of the Hallstatt culture (c. 700 to 500 BC). The Hallstatt culture

effectively held a frontier against incursions from the east by Thracian and Scythian tribes.

The subject of the replacement of the Hallstatt culture ("hall" is the old word for salt) by the La Tène culture, the final stage of the Iron Age, and its gradual transformation into a culture generally referred to as Celtic, is both complex and diverse, however the technologies, decorative practices and metal-working styles of the La Tène were to be very influential on the Celts. The La Tène style was highly derivative from the Greek, Etruscan and Scythian decorative styles with whom the La Tène settlers frequently traded.

Their original homeland has been shown by archaeological findings to have been around the upper reaches of the Danube, in Switzerland, Austria (around the village of Hallstatt) and southern Germany, and before that perhaps the central Asian steppes. From central Europe they spread as far south as the Iberian peninsula, as far north as Scotland and Denmark, as far west as Ireland and as far east as Anatolia, in many cases assimilating the previous inhabitants of these regions as they went.

It was not the Celts but these previous inhabitants who built Stonehenge and the other Neolithic and Bronze Age megalithic monuments in Europe. But even though the Celts did not construct these monuments, the religious significance of these places may well have endured among the conquered people and the Celts eventually adopted the practice of worshipping there as well. Many Celts settled in present-day France. These were the Gauls who are described by Julius Caesar in his Gallic Wars.

Other Celtic tribes invaded Italy, establishing there a city they called Mediolanum (modern Milan) and sacking Rome itself in 390 B.C. Not until 192 B.C. did the Roman armies conquer the last remaining independent Celtic kingdoms in Italy.

Other Central European tribes moved eastwards and settled in Asia Minor, there to become the Galatians (that is, Gauls) to whom an epistle of St Paul's is addressed.

New Theories of Celtic Origins in Britain

There are diverse opinions about the origins of the Celts, some supported by recent DNA studies. In the 1970's Colin Burgess in his book *The Age of Stonehenge* theorized that Celtic culture in Britain 'emerged' rather than resulted from invasion and that the Celts were not invading aliens but the descendants of the people of Stonehenge. Support for this idea comes from the study by Cristian Capelli, David Goldstein and others at University College, London which shows that genes typical of Ireland are common in Great Britain and these genes are similar to the genes of the Basque people, who speak a non-Indo-European language. This similarity, they argue, shows that the non-Indo-European native inhabitants of Britain were not wiped out by invasions of either Indo-Europeans bringing farming or Celts in 600BC. They suggest that 'Celtic' culture and the Celtic language were imported to Britain by cultural contact not mass invasion. The genetic similarity is less marked in women in Britain who have a genetic

makeup closer to that of Northern Europe —possibly because women tended to move to their husbands' homes.

Celts conquered by the Romans

Although they were for a long time the dominant people in central and western Europe, the Celts in France, Britain and Spain were eventually conquered by the Romans. Roman local government closely mirrored pre-Roman 'tribal' boundaries and archaeological finds suggest native involvement in local government. During the Roman era the Celts adopted Christianity and Latin as the official language.

Celts pushed west by Germanic Migration

Elsewhere they were pushed further westwards by successive waves of Germanic invaders, who had themselves been evicted from the Indo-European homeland on the Southern Russian steppes by Mongols, Huns and Scythians. With the fall of the Roman Empire the Celts of Gaul, Iberia and Britannia were 'conquered' by tribes speaking Germanic languages

Elsewhere, the Celtic populations were assimilated by others, leaving behind them only a legend and a number of place names such as the Spanish province of Galicia (i.e., Gaul), Bohemia, after the Boii tribe which once lived there, or the Kingdom of Belgium, after the Belgae, a Celtic tribe of Northern Gaul and south-eastern Britain. Their mythology has been absorbed into the folklore of half a dozen other countries. For instance, the famous Medieval English Arthurian tale of "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" is clearly an adaptation of a much older Irish legend about the exploits of the hero Cu Chulainn.

Argument rages in the academic world as to whether the Celts in Britain were mostly wiped out/pushed west as the lack of evidence for influence of the Celts on Anglo-Saxon society suggests, or whether the Anglo-Saxon migration consisted merely of the social elite and that the genocide was cultural rather than physical due to such relatively few numbers of Anglo-Saxons mixing with the far larger native population. Recent DNA studies have supported that Anglo-Saxon England evolved from the imposition of a new culture on the previously Celtic people of England.

Celtic Social System and Arts

The pre-Christian Celts had a well-organised social hierarchy. They produced little in the way of literary output, preferring the bardic, oral, tradition. They were highly skilled in visual arts and produced a great deal of intricate and beautiful metalwork.

Celts as head-hunters

"Amongst the Celts the human head was venerated above all else, since the head was to the Celt the soul, centre of the emotions as well as of life itself, a symbol of divinity

and of the powers of the other-world." Paul Jacobsthal, *Early Celtic Art*.

The Celtic cult of the severed head is documented not only in the many sculptured representations of severed heads in La Tene carvings, but in the surviving Celtic mythology, which is full of stories of the severed heads of heroes and the saints who carry their decapitated heads, right down to Sir Gawain and the Green Knight who picks up his own severed head after Gawain has struck it off, just as St. Denis carried his head to the top of Montmartre. Separated from the mundane body, although still alive, the animated head acquires the ability to see into the mythic realm.

Diodorus Siculus, in his 1st century History had this to say about Celtic head-hunting:

"They cut off the heads of enemies slain in battle and attach them to the necks of their horses. The blood-stained spoils they hand over to their attendants and carry off as booty, while striking up a paean and singing a song of victory; and they nail up these first fruits upon their houses, just as do those who lay low wild animals in certain kinds of hunting. They embalm in cedar oil the heads of the most distinguished enemies, and preserve them carefully in a chest, and display them with pride to strangers, saying that for this head one of their ancestors, or his father, or the man himself, refused the offer of a large sum of money. They say that some of them boast that they refused the weight of the head in gold; thus displaying what is only a barbarous kind of magnanimity, for it is not a sign of nobility to refrain from selling the proofs of one's valour. It is rather true that it is bestial to continue one's hostility against a slain fellow man."

The Celtic headhunters venerated the image of the severed head as a continuing source of spiritual power. If the head is the seat of the soul, possessing the severed head of an enemy, honorably reaped in battle, added prestige to any warrior's reputation.

External links

Celt - a contested term?

The use of the word 'Celtic' as a valid umbrella term for the pre-Roman peoples of Britain has been challenged by a number of writers - including Simon James of the British Museum. His book *The Atlantic Celts - Ancient People Or Modern Invention* makes the point that the Romans never used the term 'Celtic' in reference to the peoples of the Atlantic archipelago, i.e the British Isles. He makes it clear that the term was coined as a useful umbrella term in the 18th Century when the English Kingdom united with the Scottish. The British found it expedient to use the hitherto neutral term British for their own imperial ends. Thus a new term was needed to unite nationalists in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. The term 'Celtic' fit the bill. James makes the point that archaeology does not suggest a united Celtic culture and that the term is misleading, no more meaningful than 'Western European' would be today, and is also anachronistic.

Names for Celts

The origin of the various names used since classical times for the people known today

as the Celts is obscure and has been controversial. It appears that none of the terms recorded were ever used by Celtic speakers of themselves. In particular, there is no record of the term "Celt" being used in connection with the inhabitants of the British Isles or Ireland prior to the 19th century.

The name "Gauls"

English Gaul(s), French Gaul(es), Latin Gallus or Galli might be from an originally Celtic ethnic or tribal name (perhaps borrowed into Latin during early, 400 BCE, Celtic expansions into Italy). Its root may be the Common Celtic *galno-power or strength. Greek Galatai (see Galatia in Anatolia) seems to be based on the same root, borrowed directly from the same hypothetical Celtic source which gave us Galli (the suffix -atai is simply an ethnic name indicator).

The word "Welsh"

English Welsh, French Gallois ("Welsh"), etc. are Germanic words, yet they ultimately have a Celtic source. They are the result of an early borrowing (in the fourth century BCE) of the Celtic tribal name Uolcae ("Falcons" in Gaulish) into Primitive Germanic (becoming the Primitive Germanic *Walh-, "Foreigner" and the suffixed form *Walhisk-). The Uolcae were one of the Celtic peoples that barred, for two centuries, the southward expansion of the German tribes in central Germany on the line of the Hartz mountains and into Saxony and Silesia.

In the middle ages certain districts of what is now Germany were known as "Welschland" as opposed to "Teutschland".

The name "Celts"

English Celt(s), Latin Celtus or Celti (Celtae), Greek Keltos or Keltai seem to be based on a native Celtic ethnic name (singular *Celtos or *Celta with plurals *Celtai or *Celta:s), of unsure etymology. The root would seem to be a Primitive Indo-European *kel- or (s)kel-, but there are several such roots of various meanings to choose from (*kel- "to be prominent", *kel- "to drive or set in motion", *kel- "to strike or cut" etc.)

Related topics

- Ancient Britain
- Celtic mythology
- Irish mythology
- Celtic language
- Welsh language
- Cornish language
- Celtic law
- Celtic knot
- Celtic High Crosses
- Celtic Christianity
- Cumbric language
- Glasgow Celtic

Boston Celtics

Water horse

List of famous Celts

List of Celtic tribes

The Celt Belt

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Article On Study Re Celtic Population Cristian Capelli, David Goldstein and others at University College London.

<http://www.iht.com/cgi-bin/generic.cgi?template=articleprint.tmplh&ArticleId;=97790>

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/celtic-f-c>

3 captures

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Celtic F C

In the news

Saying goodbye with a bang

Electric New Paper, Singapore -

... Celtic chairman Brian Quinn added: 'Celtic FC is delighted to be invited by Alan Shearer to provide the opposition for his testimonial game at St James' Park. ...

Poland pick free-scoring Sosin

uefa.com, Switzerland -

... Goalkeepers: Artur Boruc (Celtic FC), Jerzy Dudek (Liverpool FC), Wojciech Kowalewski (FC Spartak Moskva), Tomasz Kuszczak (West Bromwich Albion FC). ...

FOOTBALL EUROPE: Celtic soar as Feyenoord falter

noticias.info, Spain -

/noticias.info/ Celtic FC took the Old Firm spoils and a huge lead in Scotland, while Feyenoord made a costly slip in the Netherlands. ...

Celtic soar while Feyenoord slip

uefa.com, Switzerland -

Celtic FC took the Old Firm spoils and a huge lead in Scotland, while in the Netherlands Feyenoord made a costly slip. FC Porto ...

Rayner Extends Loan

Forgotten Imp, UK -

Lincoln City FC goalkeeper Simon Rayner has extended his loan at non-league ... Last Saturday, Alfreton lost 3-0 to Stalybridge Celtic, for which Rayner accepted ...

Celtic F.C. (pronounced 'seltic', not 'keltic') is a Scottish football club based in the city of Glasgow, nicknamed the Bhoys. Together with their arch-rivals Rangers they dominate Scottish football as the Old Firm. Their kit is green and white hooped jerseys, white shorts and white socks. They play at the 60,830 seater stadium Celtic Park, known as 'Paradise' by Celtic supporters.

right

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2 Recent Achievements

3 Honours

4 Famous Celts

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History

Celtic was founded in 1888 by the Marist Brother Walfrid as a way to raise funds to help impoverished members of Glasgow's Irish community, but quickly became a force in Scottish football, winning their first league title in 1893.

Under their first manager, Willie Maley, the Bhoys won 30 major trophies in 43 years.

Celtic played Aberdeen in the 1937 Scottish Cup final at Hampden Park, Glasgow in front of a crowd of 146,433 (sometimes counted as 147,365), a record for the largest attendance for a European club match. Two years later, Celtic defeated Everton 1-0 at Ibrox for the Empire Exhibition Trophy.

Ex-player and captain Jimmy McGrory became Celtic's manager in 1940. Under McGrory, Celtic defeated Arsenal, Manchester United and Hibernian to win the Coronation Cup, a tournament held in May 1953 to commemorate the coronation of

Elizabeth II.

On October 10, 1957, Celtic produced one of the more famous scorelines in football when they defeated Rangers 7-1 in the Scottish League Cup final played at Hampden Park, retaining the trophy they won for the first time the previous year.

Jock Stein succeeded McGrory in 1965. A former player and team captain, Stein gained most of his fame as Celtic's manager, and is acknowledged as one of the greatest football managers of all time. He managed Celtic to its nine straight Scottish League wins from 1966 to 1974.

1967 was to be Celtic's best ever year. Celtic won every competition it entered: the Scottish League, the Scottish Cup, the Scottish League Cup, the Glasgow Cup; and the Bhoys became the first British side to win the European Cup. The "Lisbon Lions", managed by Jock Stein and captained by Billy McNeill, defeated Inter Milan 2-1 in Lisbon, Portugal.

Celtic reached the European Cup Final again in 1970 but were beaten 2-1 by Feyenoord in the San Siro Stadium, Milan.

In 1994, expatriate businessman and Celtic supporter Fergus McCann took control of the club, ousting the family dynasties which controlled the club since its foundation. To alleviate the club's financial strain, Celtic was reconstituted as a public limited company, resulting in one of the most successful share flotations in British history. The club netted £14 million towards the refinancing of the club.

Recent Achievements

The current manager, as of January 2004 is the Irishman Martin O'Neill from Kilrea, County Derry. In O'Neill's first season in 2000, Celtic won the domestic treble of the Scottish Premier League, the Scottish Cup, and the CIS Insurance Cup (the former Scottish League Cup). Celtic also recorded another memorable scoreline in the "Demolition Derby" match against Rangers, winning 6-2.

In 2003 they reached the UEFA Cup final but lost at the hands of an extra-time goal by Porto, marking the first use of the new silver goal rule in competition. The final score in Seville was Porto 3 - Celtic 2. At the game Celtic brought with them the biggest travelling army of fans ever seen in a European tournament. Over 75,000 Celtic fans from throughout the world travelled to the city, and their spirit earned them a Fair Play award from FIFA.

In 2004 they continued to prosper in the UEFA Cup, beating FC Barcelona 1-0 at Parkhead, on March 11th 2004, in what was to be one of their most famous victories. Two weeks later, under intense pressure they managed to hold Barcelona in the famous Camp Nou stadium to a 0-0 draw thus ensuring qualification to the quarterfinals. However, the Bhoys lost in the quarterfinals to another Spanish side, Villarreal CF (3-1 on aggregate). Celtic made up for this loss by winning their 39th League title and 32nd

Scottish Cup.

Honours

European Champions Cup (1): 1967.

Scottish League Champions (39): 1893, 1894, 1896, 1898, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1922, 1926, 1936, 1938, 1954, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1988, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2004.

Scottish Cup (32): 1892, 1899, 1900, 1904, 1907, 1908, 1911, 1912, 1914, 1923, 1925, 1927, 1931, 1933, 1937, 1951, 1954, 1965, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1980, 1985, 1988, 1989, 1995, 2001, 2004.

Scottish League Cup (12): 1957, 1958, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1975, 1983, 1998, 2000, 2001.

Famous Celts

Roy Aitken

Bertie Auld

Tommy Burns

Dennis Connaghan

Pat Crerand

Kenny Dalglish

Patsy Gallacher

Tommy Gemmell

David Hay

Harry Hood

Jimmy Johnstone

Paul Lambert

Henrik Larsson

Neil Lennon

Bobby Lennox

Lou Macari

Willie Maley

Danny McGrain

Jimmy McGrory

Billy McNeill (Caesar)

Paul McStay

Charlie Nicholas

Ronnie Simpson

Jock Stein

Chris Sutton

John Thomson

Charlie Tully

External Links

Official club website

Not the View fanzine

E-Tims online fanzine

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Glasgow

In the news

Glasgow city leaders pledge to create thousands of jobs

Glasgow Daily Record, UK -

By Stephen Houston. BY far the biggest employer in Glasgow is the City Council itself.

There's a staff of 37,000 spread throughout ...

Glasgow Daily Times

Glasgow Daily Times, KY -

... 7 when it travels to Taylor County for a 7 pm CST contest. Monroe hosts Glasgow

that night in a 15th District contest at 7:30 pm local time. ...

Spate of Crime Hits Glasgow Churches

Zenit News Agency, Italy -

GLASGOW, Scotland, FEB. ... "I am horrified at the level of intimidation my priests are having to face," said the archbishop of Glasgow in a statement. ...

Cities Revealed™ Land Use map helps Glasgow see Green

DirectionsMag.com, IL -

... of Cities Revealed™ aerial photography (<http://www.citiesrevealed.com>), recently created a 'Cities Revealed Land Use map of Glasgow', using national land ...

MORE pupils are excluded from Glasgow secondary schools than ...

Glasgow Evening Times, UK -

... Across all types of schools - primary, secondary and special needs - there was a total of 7469 exclusions in Glasgow for 2004/5 - an increase of 551 on the ...

For other uses, see Glasgow (disambiguation)

Glasgow is Scotland's largest city, located on the River Clyde in West Central Scotland.

It is also one of 32 unitary council regions in Scotland, officially known as City of Glasgow and, like many west of Scotland councils is effectively a Labour fiefdom, having been run by the party for well over 30 years. Glasgow had a population of 577,869 at the time of the 2001 census, while approximately 1.2 million people live in the city's greater metropolitan area. The name comes from the Brythonic glas cu (compare modern Gaelic Glaschu), meaning green hollow, and usually romantically translated as "the dear green place". It is popularly referred to as "Glesga" by

Glaswegians who are known as "keelies" or "weegies" by other Scots. Scots from the Scottish Highlands and the Western Isles are known as "teuchters" by the keelies.

George Square and Glasgow's City ChambersEnlarge
George Square and Glasgow's City Chambers

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Coat of arms

The coat of arms shows Glasgow's patron saint, Saint Kentigern also known as Saint Mungo, and includes four emblems - the bird, tree, bell, and fish. The emblems represent miracles Saint Mungo was supposed to have performed. The motto of the city is "Let Glasgow Flourish" and this is part of the arms. The motto is derived from Saint Mungo's original sermon: "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the word". Children are taught to remember the arms using the following verse:

:::Here's the bird that never flew
:::Here's the tree that never grew
:::Here's the bell that never rang
:::Here's the fish that never swam

History

History section needs to be completed

Founding of the City

The site of present day Glasgow has been found to have hosted communities for centuries, with the River Clyde provided a natural location for fishing. The Romans later built outposts in the area, and constructed the Antonine Wall, remains of which can still be seen in Glasgow today, to keep Roman Britannia separate from the Celt and Picts Caledonia.

Glasgow itself was founded by the Christian missionary Saint Mungo (also known as Saint Kentigern) in 6th CE. He established a Church where the present Cathedral stands, and in the following years Glasgow became a religious centre. The miracles that Saint Mungo performed now adorn the city's Coat of Arms.

The Cathedral City

The history of Glasgow is vague until the creation of the cathedral in Glasgow.

Trade & The Industrial Revolution

Decline of Industry & the Post-War Period

Decline of shipbuilding

Modern Glasgow

Rebuilding of Glasgow and the major cultural activities

Art and architecture

Unlike Edinburgh, very little of medieval Glasgow remains, the two main landmarks from this period being confined to the 14th century Provand's Lordship and Glasgow Cathedral. The vast majority of the city as it is seen today dates from the 19th century, and as a result, Glasgow has an impressive heritage of Victorian architecture; examples of which include the Glasgow City Chambers, the main building of the University of Glasgow, designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, and the Glasgow School of Art, designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, being outstanding examples. Another architect who has had a great and enduring impact on the city's appearance was Alexander Thompson, who produced a distinctive architecture based on fundamentalist classicism that gave him the nickname "Greek". He was described as a "quiet, stay-at-home Victorian behind whose buttoned-up facade there seethed a kind of stylistic corsair who plundered the past for the greater glory of the present".

Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art

Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art

The buildings reflect the wealth and self confidence of the residents of the "second city of the Empire". There is even a building facing Glasgow Green, originally Templeton's carpet factory, which was designed as a replica of the Doge's Palace in Venice. It doesn't look out of place in Glasgow. The wealth came from the industries that developed from the Industrial Revolution. The shipyards, marine engineering, steel making, and heavy industry all contributed to the growth of the city. At one time the expression "Clyde-built" was synonymous with quality and engineering excellence.

Of course, there was another side to the picture. The beautiful buildings were built with red or gold sandstone but after a few years those colours had disappeared under a pervasive black layer of soot and pollutants from the furnaces. There were other buildings. Tenements were built to house the workers who migrated from Ireland, the Scottish Highlands, the islands and the country areas to feed the insatiable need for labour. The tenements were often overcrowded and insanitary, and many developed into the infamous Glasgow slums, the Gorbals area being one of the most infamous.

In recent years many of these buildings have been cleaned and restored to their original appearance. Others were demolished to make way for large, barrack-like housing estates, and high-rise flats. The latter were built in large numbers during the 1960s and early 1970s, and indeed, Glasgow has a higher concentration of high-rise buildings than any other city in the UK. The Red Road flats in the north of the city, at 32 storeys were for many years the highest residential buildings in Europe.

Many people feel that this has been less than successful as many of the "schemes" were heartless dormitories well away from the centre of the city with no amenities, and which split up long established community relationships. Many of the high-rise

developments were poorly designed, cheaply built and became a magnet for crime. Over time many have become as bad as the slum areas that they replaced. Today the city council has begun a programme of demolishing the high-rises which are in most need of disposal.

The Glasgow Science CentreEnlarge
The Glasgow Science Centre

Modern buildings in Glasgow include the Glasgow Science Centre and the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Along the banks of the Clyde is the Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre, and shopping centres include the Buchanan Galleries, the glass pyramid of the St Enoch Centre, and the upmarket Princes Square.

Culture

The city is blessed with amenities which cover a wide range of cultural activities, from curling to opera and from football to art appreciation.

Glasgow boasts a fine selection of museums that include those devoted to transport, religion, and modern art. The Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum (currently undergoing major renovation) has an excellent collection of paintings including many old masters, French Impressionists etc, and is reputedly the second most visited museum in the United Kingdom. The Hunterian Museum at Glasgow University has the best collection of Whistler paintings in the world. The Burrell Collection is an eclectic collection of art and antiquities donated to the city by William Burrell (although sometimes acquired by him in dubious title, in colonial times). It is housed in a museum situated in the Pollock Country Park. The People's Palace museum reflects the history of the city and its people.

The Mitchell Library is the largest public reference library in Europe.

The Scottish Opera is based at the Theatre Royal.

Glasgow has a number of parks and open spaces that give the city places to "breathe". Among these are:

Bellahouston Park
Glasgow Green
Kelvingrove Park
Victoria Park
Maxwell Park
Pollock Country Park
Queen's Park
Rouken Glen

The city was host to the two Great Exhibitions of 1881 and 1901. More recently it was European Capital of Culture 1990, National City of Sport 1995-1999, UK City of

Architecture and Design 1999 and European Capital of Sport 2003

Sport

Glasgow is home to Scotland's largest football stadiums: Celtic Park (60,000+); Ibrox Stadium (50,000+); and Hampden Park (50,000+), which is Scotland's national football stadium. Glasgow has four senior football clubs: Rangers and Celtic, who together make the Old Firm, and are the most famous Scottish football teams; Partick Thistle; and Queen's Park. Clyde and Third Lanark used to be two other senior football clubs in the city.

There are major international sporting arenas, such as Kelvin Hall and Scotstoun Sports Centres. In 2003 the National Academy for Badminton was completed in Scotstoun.

Religious rivalry

Strong religious rivalry still exists in certain sectors of the population. The sporting rivalry between the supporters of Celtic and Rangers has an underlying religious basis for some people. Large numbers of Celtic Supporters are drawn from the Irish and Roman Catholic communities, while Rangers supporters are almost exclusively non-Catholics. This division dates from Rangers' policy to not sign Catholics as players after John Ure Primrose took over as Chairman of the club. Primrose was a noted Unionist politician and has been described as a "bigot". This practice continued at the club for 76 years until 1988. Celtic never adopted such a policy, hence a somewhat more diverse support.

At Celtic Park, the national Flag of Ireland has a place of honour and at Ibrox Stadium, it is the Union Jack. The Orangemen of Glasgow (members of the Protestant Orange Lodges), parade annually through the city, playing flutes and drums and singing songs. Most people view this as an irrelevant throwback to more intolerant times and less liberal views, and the size of these parades seems to be dwindling over the years. However, these parades cause much offence to Catholics and are often exploited by religious bigots and anti-Irish racists.

Glasgow has constantly had a ferment of new incoming religious groups, Jews, Highlanders, Irish Catholics, and more recently asylum seekers from a multiplicity of faiths. More enlightened young people see this as an enrichment and revitalising of the city, and regard bigotry as a dark but distant part of this vibrant and modern city's history. However, Glasgow has a long way to go in accepting other religions and faiths, and for many first and second generation immigrants, particularly Irish Catholics who suffered much oppression over the years, Glasgow remains a relatively intolerant city.

Politics

Glasgow is famous as a hotbed of socialism. As mentioned above, the city has been controlled by the Labour party for 30 years, but its socialist roots are far-reaching, from the city's days as a working-class dominated industrial powerhouse. In the 1920s and 1930s the city's strikes and revolutionary fever caused serious alarm at Westminster, with one uprising causing tanks to be sent on to the city's streets. Later, strikes at the

shipyards gave rise to the Red Clydeside tag.

People

Glasgow currently has the largest number of citizens under the poverty line in the UK, and the divide between the city's leafy and wealthy areas and their nearby deprived neighbours can be startling.

This poverty is compounded by the city's severe health situation, with some of the worst incidence of heart disease and cancer in Scotland, which as a whole has the worst levels in Western Europe. Statistics show that living in Glasgow reduces life expectancy by up to 10 years. This is largely attributed to the native diet, which tends to be fatty.

Many social initiatives aimed at reversing the situation, including free fruit and free access to sport centres for schoolchildren, are being put in place.

Dialect

Glasgow people have a unique sense of humour, and strong loyalty to their own city. The Glasgow Patter is a brand of local humorous Scots dialect which is hilarious to those who understand it, usually only natives of the city.

Billy Connolly has done a lot to make Glaswegian humour accessible to the rest of the world but, inevitably, it loses something in translation. In fact Glaswegian is a rich and vital living dialect which gives a true reflection of the city with all its virtues and its unattractive features. It is more than an alternative pronunciation; words also change their meaning eg "away" can mean "leaving" as in "A'm awa", an instruction to stop being a nuisance as in "awa wi ye", or drunk as in "he's awa wi it". "Canna" means "can't", "Canny" means "careful". "Pieces" refers to "snacks", normally slices of bread. Then there are words that appear to have no obvious relationship to standard English, words like "coupin" which means "face".

An example of the dialect which comes from an anonymous lament by a housing scheme resident for the remembered joys of life in the city before being rehoused in one of the "deserts with windows" that were the schemes:

whaur's the weans that yince played in the street,
:wi a jaurie, a peerie an gird wi a cleat,
:can they still codge a hudge or dreep aff the dyke,
:play haunch cuddy haunch, kick the can an the like?

Education

Glasgow is also a major education centre with four Universities within ten miles of the city centre, universities such as Glasgow University (which has one of the highest ratios of students who continue living at home), University of Strathclyde and Glasgow Caledonian University, teacher training colleges, teaching hospitals, and a range of technical colleges.

Media

Glasgow is also home to large sections of the Scottish national media. It hosts:

Television

BBC Scotland - the national broadcaster, based in Queen Margaret Drive

Scottish Television - one of Scotland's two independent ITV companies, owned by the

Scottish Media Group - which also owns the other, Grampian Television

BBC Radio Scotland

Clyde 1

The Daily Record - Scotland's best-selling tabloid, based at Anderston Quay

The Herald - Scotland's best-selling broadsheet

The Sunday Herald - its five-year-old sister title

The Evening Times - an evening tabloid distributed in the west of Scotland

As well as Scottish editions of:

The Sun

The Daily Mail and Sunday Mail

The Times and Sunday Times

Airports

Glasgow has two main airports; Glasgow International (Abbotsinch) is the larger of the two and handles the majority of Glasgow's air traffic, including shuttle flights to and from London and the rest of the UK, and transatlantic links to Chicago and New York.

Glasgow Prestwick is located 29 miles south west of the city, and caters mainly for charter flights, low-cost airlines, and freight traffic. Links:

Glasgow International Airport (GLA)

Glasgow Prestwick International Airport in Ayrshire (PIK)

There are also two small airfields in the nearby towns of Cumbernauld, and Strathaven, near East Kilbride.

Railway stations

The city has two main line railway stations. Queen Street station, located on the northern periphery of the city centre connects Glasgow to the North of Scotland, and Edinburgh. Central Station, located on Argyle Street is the northern terminus of the West Coast Main Line, and connects Glasgow with the South, and is the rail gateway to England and the rest of the UK.

Queen Street Station

Central Station

Major roads

Glasgow has a less congested road network than Edinburgh, and the argument for congestion charging has not been as great. The city is linked to the rest of the country by the following main roads.

A8/M8: Main east-west corridor which links Glasgow to Edinburgh, and Greenock to the west.

A82: Dumbarton, Loch Lomond and the North West Highlands

A80/M80: Stirling and the North East

A77/M77: Kilmarnock, Ayr and the South West

A74/M74: Main link to the South and England

The grid-like layout of the city centre makes it relatively car friendly, despite the numerous and confusing one-way systems.

Urban transport

Glasgow is the only British city other than London to have an underground metro system. The Glasgow Underground (or Subway), was built in 1896 and substantially modernised in 1977. There is also a suburban above ground rail system, centred on Central Station. The rail based urban and suburban systems are run by Strathclyde Passenger Transport.

The bus network is deregulated and there are several competing companies.

Suburbs and surrounding district

The City of Glasgow outgrew its borders; many areas officially within surrounding Local Authority Areas are therefore considered part of the city. Areas of Glasgow include:

North of the river: Dalmuir, Clydebank, Knightswood, Bearsden, Milngavie, Jordanhill, Summerston, Maryhill, Partick, Bishopbriggs, Balornock, Millerston, Lenzie, Chryston, Gartcosh, Dennistoun, Riddrie, Shettleston, Easterhouse, Tollcross, Ballieston, Birkenshaw, Uddingston and Woodlands.

South of the river: Braehead, Cardonald, Pollok, Nitshill, Thornliebank, Govan, Gorbals, Govanhill, Pollokshields, Pollokshaws, Cathcart, Newlands, Giffnock, Rutherglen, Castlemilk, Bothwell and Cambuslang.

See also:

Glasgow City Chambers

Famous Glaswegians

Arts

Robert Carlyle - actor

Robbie Coltrane - actor

Billy Connolly - comedian

Gregor Fisher - comedian

Rikki Fulton - comedian

John Glashan - cartoonist

Charles Rennie Mackintosh - architect, designer

Alexander Greek Thomson

Nigel Tranter - historian, writer

Business

Sir Thomas Lipton

Music

Bay City Rollers

Del Amitri

Franz Ferdinand

Mark Knopfler

Lulu

Travis

Wet Wet Wet

Politics

Donald Dewar

John Maclean

James Maxton

Sports

Kenny Dalglish - football player and manager

Sir Alex Ferguson - football manager

Benny Lynch - boxer

Ally McCoist - football player and television personality

Jock Stein - football manager

Science

William Thomson, Lord Kelvin

Joseph Lister

Sir William Ramsay

Joseph Black

Other

Allan Pinkerton - detective

Adam Smith - economist

Twinned cities

Glasgow has been twinned with various cities around the world including:

Turin, Italy

Nuremberg, Germany

Rostov-on-Don, Russia

Dalian, China

Havana, Cuba

External links

History of Glasgow's West End

Redevelopment of the Gorbals

Glasgow City Council

Glasgow Dialect

Scottish vernacular dictionary

Glasgow Museums

Glasgow Survival - A humorous look at Glasgow's ubiquitous "ned" culture [Warning: Strong Language]

Tongs! Ya Bass - A history of the Glasgow Gangs

GlasgowGuide - An openguide for Glasgow

The Glasgow Gang Culture Website

Glasgow Scotland with Style

Glasgow City Council pages

History of Glasgow

Twin Cities

Famous Glaswegians

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<http://www.wikiverse.org/scotland>

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Scotland

In the news

Bank of Scotland pays £4.5m to secure new finance boss

Guardian Unlimited, UK -

Guy Whittaker, the new finance director of Royal Bank of Scotland, is to receive £4.5m in cash and shares to buy him out of an incentive scheme at his ...

Website lends support to vulnerable individuals in Scotland

Computer Business Review, UK -

A new website has been launched in Scotland to lend support to vulnerable people and help them live independently in their own homes, according to a report by ...

Cancer cases in Scotland set to soar by up to 50 per cent

Scotsman, United Kingdom -

CASES of cancer in Scotland are set to soar by up to 50 per cent within a decade, a new report warns. Thousands more people will ...

Michalak to play through pain barrier against Scotland

Reuters.uk, UK -

... flyhalf Frederic Michalak said on Wednesday he would be playing through the pain barrier in his side's Six Nations opener against Scotland at Murrayfield on ...

Study to follow Scotland's health

BBC News, UK -

Researchers plan to recruit 50,000 people to take part in Generation Scotland, one of the largest-ever family healthcare projects in the UK. ...

Alternate uses. See Scotland (disambiguation).

Scotland, or in Gaelic, Alba, is a country (formerly an independent kingdom) of northwest Europe, occupying the northern third of the island of Great Britain.

Scotland was first united with England in 1603, when the Scottish King James the Sixth became James the First of England and Scotland. On March 26, 1707, the Scottish and English parliaments merged to form the Kingdom of Great Britain, which eventually became the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, though some aspects, notably Scotland's legal system, did remain separate. In 1999, Scotland received its own devolved home rule parliament to govern the country on purely domestic matters. Scotland is the second-largest nation in the United Kingdom (after England).

Scotland (Scots/English)

Alba (Gaelic)

The Saltire (or St Andrew's cross), the national flag of Scotland 150px
(In detail) (Full size)
Royal motto: Nemo me impune lacessit (Latin: No one provokes me with impunity)
Image:LocationScotland.png
Image:UKScotland.jpg
Scotland's location within the UK
Official languages English (de facto), Scots Gaelic, Scots
Capital Edinburgh
First Minister Jack McConnell MSP
Area
- Total
- % water Ranked 2nd
78,782 km²
1.9%
Population
- Total (2001)
- Density Ranked 2nd
5,062,011
64/km²
Establishment Kenneth MacAlpin, 843
Currency Pound Sterling (£) (GBP)
Time zone WET (UTC; UTC+1 in summer)
National anthem Flower of Scotland (unofficial)
NUTS 1: UKM
Internet TLD .uk
Calling Code 44
International call prefix 00

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Head of State

Queen Elizabeth II Head of State of the United Kingdom is descended from King James VI, the first Scottish monarch to also be King of England (James I of England from 1603). While some controversy has simmered amongst the Scottish public over her official title since her coronation (many believe that, logically, she should use the style "Elizabeth I"), the courts of Scotland have confirmed "Elizabeth II" as her official title. She has said that in future monarchs will follow the international ordinal tradition that, where a monarch reigns in a number of non-independent territories (or independent territories that agree to share a monarch) that each have a differing number of previous monarchs of the same name, the highest ordinal used in any of the territories is the one used across all. (Past Scottish-English monarchs such as James VI & I and James VII & II reigned over legally separate kingdoms and hence used a dual ordinal.)

Geography

Scotland comprises the northern part of the island of Great Britain; it is bordered on the south by England. The country consists of a mainland area plus several island groups, including [Shetland Islands|Shetland], [Orkney Islands|Orkney], and the Hebrides, divided into the Inner Hebrides and Outer Hebrides. Three main geographical and geological areas make up the mainland: from north to south, the generally mountainous Highlands, the low-lying Central Belt, and the hilly Southern Uplands. The majority of the Scottish population resides in the Central Belt, which contains three of the country's five main cities, and many large towns.

Geology

Tectonic Plate Movement

When vulcanism actively occurred in East Lothian, 350 million years ago, the rocks which now comprise Scotland lay close to the equator, and formed part of the newly amalgamated supercontinent of Pangaea. The continental plates making up Pangaea continued to converge, and a major collision occurred with the continent of Gondwana. The northern and southern parts of the island of Great Britain became adjoined only 75 million years before the onset of vulcanism in East Lothian. Before then, Scotland lay on the margin of the Laurentian continent, which included North America and Greenland. England and Wales lay some 40° of latitude further south, adjacent to Africa and South America in the Gondwanan continent. In the Early Ordovician, approximately 475 million years ago, England and Wales, on the Avalonian plate, rifted away from Gondwana and drifted northward towards Laurentia. The Iapetus Ocean, which separated the two land masses, began to close. By the mid-Silurian, about 420 million years ago, its margins had become attached along the Iapetus Suture, which roughly follows a line running West to East from the Solway Firth to Northumberland.

When the later episode of vulcanism occurred, approximately 270 million years ago, Scotland still comprised part of Pangaea, but had drifted northward. East Lothian stood at about 8° North. Consolidation of Pangaea had continued so that the nearest ocean, the Tethys seaway, lay between Eurasia and Africa.

See <http://www.glg.ed.ac.uk/home/s9810658/eastlothian/plates/tectonics.html> and Geology of the United Kingdom.

Language

Almost all residents of Scotland speak English, although many speak various Scots dialects which differ markedly from Scottish Standard English. Approximately 2% of the population use Scots Gaelic as their language of every-day use, primarily in the northern and western regions of the country. Almost all Gaelic speakers also speak fluent English.

By the time of James VI's accession to the English throne the old Scottish Court and Parliament spoke Scots, also known as Lallans. Scots developed from the Anglian spoken in the Northumbrian kingdom of Bernicia, which in the 6th century conquered the Brythonic kingdom of Gododdin and renamed its capital of Dunedin to Edinburgh.

History

See also the main article: History of Scotland.

Historically, from at least the reign of David I (ruled 1124 - 1153), Scotland began to show a split into two cultural areas - the mainly Scots, latterly English-speaking Lowlands, and the mainly-Gaelic speaking Highlands. This caused divisions in the

country where the Lowlands remained, historically, more influenced by the English to the south: the Lowlands lay more open to attack by invading armies from the south and absorbed English influence through their proximity to and their trading relations with their southern neighbours.

The clan system in Highland Scotland formed one of its more distinctive features. Notable clans include Clan MacGregor, Clan MacDonald, Clan Mackenzie, Clan Mackie, Clan MacLeod, Clan Robertson, Clan Campbell and others.

Historically the Lowlands adopted a variant of the feudal system after the Norman Conquest of England, with families of Norman ancestry providing most of the monarchs after approximately 1100 AD. These families included the Stewart or Stuart, Bruce, Douglas, Porteous, and Murray or Moray families.

During the Wars of Scottish Independence (approximately 1290 - 1363) the Scottish people rose up against English rule, firstly, under the leadership of Sir William Wallace, and later, under that of Robert the Bruce. Bruce won a famous victory over the English at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

In 1603 the Scottish King James VI inherited the throne of England, and became James I of England. James moved to London and only returned once to Scotland. In 1707 the Scottish and English Parliaments signed a Treaty of Union. Implementing the treaty involved dissolving both the English and the Scottish Parliaments, and transferring all their powers to a new Parliament in London which then became the United Kingdom Parliament. A customs and currency union also took place.

This state of affairs continued until May 1999 when Scotland gained a new Scottish Parliament. Whereas the old Scottish parliament had functioned as a full national parliament of a sovereign state, the new parliament governs the country only on domestic matters, the United Kingdom parliament having retained responsibility for Scotland's defence, international relations and certain other areas.

Modern Scotland

Scotland comprises 32 unitary authority regions.

Popular folk-memory continues to divide Scotland into 33 traditional counties.

Scotland has six designated cities: in descending order of population size:

Glasgow
Edinburgh, the capital
Aberdeen
Dundee
Inverness
Stirling

Waterways in Scotland:

Major Rivers:

The Clyde, The Dee, The Don, The Forth, The Tay, The Tweed, The Spey, ...

Firths (estuaries)

Solway, Clyde, Lorn, Dornoch, Inverness, Moray, Tay, Forth

Sea Lochs (fjords)

Loch Linnhe, Loch Fyne, Loch Long, Loch Etive, Loch Sunart, Loch Nevis, Loch Hourn, Loch Broom

Freshwater Lochs (lakes) include:

Loch Ness, Loch Lomond, Loch Morar, Loch Tay, Loch Rannoch, Loch Awe, Loch Shiel, Loch Maree, The Lake of Menteith,...

Artificial & Enhanced waterways include:

Caledonian Canal, Crinan Canal, Forth & Clyde Canal, Union Canal

See Also Falkirk Wheel

Culture

Scotland has a civic culture distinct from that of the rest of the British Isles. It originates from various differences, some entrenched as part of the Act of Union, others facets of nationhood not readily defined but readily identifiable.

Scots Law

Scotland retains its own unique legal system, based on Roman law, which combines features of both civil law and common law. The terms of union with England specified the retention of separate systems. Scots Law differs from England's common law system.

Scottish Education

Scotland also has a separate Scottish education system. The Act of Union guaranteed the rights of the Scottish universities, but more importantly, Scotland became the first country since Sparta in classical Greece to implement a system of general public education. This began with the Education Act of 1696 and became compulsory for children from the implementation of the Education Act of 1872 onwards. As a result, for over two hundred years Scotland had a higher percentage of its population educated at primary, secondary and tertiary levels than any other country in Europe. The differences in education have manifested themselves in different ways, but most noticeably in the number of Scots who went on to become leaders in their fields during the 18th and 19th centuries.

School students in Scotland sit Higher exams rather than the English A-Level system. Also, a Scottish university's honours degree takes four years of study as opposed to three in the rest of the UK. The university systems in several Commonwealth countries show marked affinities with the Scottish rather than the English system.

Banking

Banking in Scotland also features unique characteristics. Although the Bank of England remains the central bank for the UK Government, three Scottish corporate banks still issue their own banknotes: (the Bank of Scotland, the Royal Bank of Scotland and the Clydesdale Bank). These notes have no status as legal tender in England, Wales or Northern Ireland. In Scotland, neither they nor the Bank of England's notes rank as legal tender (as Scots law lacks the concept), however banknotes issued by any of the four banks meet with common acceptance. See British banknotes.

For a further discussion read Legal Tender

The modern system of branch banking (in which banks maintain a nationwide system of offices rather than one or two central offices) originated in Scotland. Only strong political pressure during the 19th century prevented the resultant strong banking system from taking over banking in England. However, although Scottish banks proved unwelcome in England at the time, their business model became widely copied, firstly in England and later in the rest of the world.

Sports

Scotland has many national sporting associations, such as the Scottish Football Association or the Scottish Rugby Union. This gives the country independent representation at many international sporting events such as the football World Cup. Scotland cannot compete in the Olympic Games independently however, and Scottish athletes must compete as part of the Great Britain team if they wish to take part. Scotland does however send its own team to compete in the Commonwealth Games.

Scotland also has its own sporting competitions distinct from the rest of the UK, such as the Scottish Football League.

Media

Scotland has distinct media from the rest of the UK. For example, it produces many national newspapers such as The Daily Record (Scotland's leading tabloid) and the two major broadsheets, The Herald based in Glasgow, and The Scotsman in Edinburgh. The Herald, formerly known as the Glasgow Herald, changed its name to promote a national rather than a regional identity. Sunday newspapers include the tabloid Sunday Mail (published by the Daily Record) and the Sunday Post, while the Sunday Herald and Scotland on Sunday have associations with The Herald and The Scotsman respectively. Regional dailies include The Courier and Advertiser in Dundee in the east, and The Press and Journal serving Aberdeen and the north.

Scotland has its own BBC services which include the national radio stations, BBC Radio Scotland and Gaelic language service, BBC Radio nan Gaidheal. There are also a number of BBC and independent local radio stations throughout the country. In addition to radio, BBC Scotland also runs two national television stations. Much of the output of BBC Scotland Television, such as news and current affairs programmes, and the

Glasgow-based soap opera, *River City*, are intended for broadcast within Scotland, whilst others, such as drama and comedy programmes, aim at audiences throughout the UK and further afield. Sports coverage also differs, reflecting the fact that the country has its own football leagues, separate from those of England.

Three Independent Television stations (Scottish TV, Grampian TV and Border) also broadcast in Scotland. Although they previously had independent existences, Scottish TV (serving the Central Lowlands) and Grampian (serving the Highlands and Islands) now belong to the same company (The Scottish Media Group) and resemble each other closely, apart from local news coverage. "Border" has had a more complex position, as it also has to serve neighbouring areas across the border in England, as well as the Isle of Man, and it now has separate news programs for each side of the border. Most of the independent television output equates to that transmitted in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with the exception of news and current affairs, sport, cultural and Gaelic language programming.

Other facets of Scottish Culture

Scotland retains its own distinct sense of nationhood. Academic research consistently shows that people in Scotland feel Scottish, whilst not necessarily feeling the need to see that translated into the establishment of a fully-independent Scottish nation-state.

Scotland also has its own unique family of languages and dialects, helping to foster a strong sense of "Scottish-ness". See Scots Language.

Scotland retains its own national church, separate from that of England. See Church of Scotland and the section on "Religion" elsewhere in this article.

These factors combine together to form a strong, readily identifiable Scottish civic culture.

Miscellaneous

Scotland's iconic claims to fame include:

Bagpipes

Robert Burns, Burns night, Burns supper

Haggis

Irn Bru

Kilts and Tartan

Loch Ness, said to contain the Loch Ness monster "Nessie".

Scotch whisky and its distilleries

Scottish Highlands (Cairngorms, Aviemore, Munros) and islands (Hebrides, Orkney, Shetland)

Hogmanay (New Year's Eve)

Scottish country dancing

Shortbread

Tweed, especially Harris Tweed

Religion

The Church of Scotland (often referred to as The Kirk) functions as the national church. It differs from the Church of England in that it has a Presbyterian form of church governance, not subject to state control. This goes back to the Scottish experience of reformation, initiated in 1560 by John Knox. The Scottish Reformation in essence took place at a grassroots level, and the Scots chose Presbyterianism as their method of church government. This differs from the situation in England, where Henry the Eighth personally unleashed the English Reformation and chose the Episcopal system that survives to this day in the Church of England.

A number of other Christian denominationss exist in Scotland, amongst them Roman Catholicism, which made a comeback through immigration after Protestants brutally repressed it during the 16th to late 18th centuries. It has now become the largest faith outwith The Kirk. As well as The Kirk we find various other Protestant churches, including the Scottish Episcopal Church, which forms a full part of the Anglican Communion, and the Free Church of Scotland, a Presbyterian off-shoot from the established Church of Scotland.

Islam has the largest number of adherents outside of Christianity in Scotland, although its numbers remain very small.

Much of Scotland (particularly the West Central Belt around Glasgow) has experienced problems owing to the religious divide between Presbyterians and Catholics. This problem has historically manifested itself in a number of ways, particularly in employment and in football fanaticism. The problems associated with sectarianism in Scotland have diminished markedly compared with the past, although issues do remain to a certain degree.

Figures from the 2001 Census on Religion in Scotland:

Religion	Population
Church of Scotland >	42%
Roman Catholic >	16%
Other Christian >	7%
Islamic >	0.8%
Buddhist >	0.1%
Sikh >	0.1%
Judaism >	0.1%
Hindu >	0.1%
Other Religion >	0.5%
No Religion >	28%
No Answer >	5%

Politics

See main article: Politics of Scotland

Historically the politics of Scotland have reflected those of the UK as a whole, although with some differences. For example, besides the main UK-wide political parties (Labour, Conservatives and the Lib-Dems) a number of Scottish-specific parties operate. These include the Scottish Independence Party (SIP), the Scottish National Party (SNP), the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) and the Scottish Green Party. These parties became more of a force in Scottish politics after the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1998.

The traditional political divides of left and right have also intersected with arguments over devolution, which all the UK-wide parties have supported to some degree throughout their history (although both Labour and the Conservatives have swithered a number of times between supporting and opposing it). However, now that devolution has occurred, the main argument about Scotland's constitutional status remains between those who support Scottish independence and those who oppose it.

The Scottish Economy

The Scottish economy comprises many different sectors. Oil remains important, although light engineering and shipbuilding have seen a decline in recent years, and the service sector (especially finance and call centres) has increased in importance. Rural activities like fishing and agriculture remain important, although the country's 'Silicon Glen' has also seen growth in the manufacture of computers and mobile phones. Scotch whisky production continues to have significance, as does the country's tourism industry.

Further Reference

See also :

History of Scotland

Caledonia

Subdivisions of Scotland

List of burghs in Scotland

National parks (Scotland)

Traditional music of Scotland

Flower of Scotland

Wars of Scottish Independence

Historic houses in Scotland

Castles in Scotland

Museums in Scotland

Abbeys and priories in Scotland

Gardens in Scotland

List of Scottish Universities

Scots Law

List of Scots

List of Scottish writers

List of United Kingdom topics

For a list of kings of Scotland see the List of British monarchs and Scottish monarchs family tree

External links

Scotland Royalty - Kings & Queens of Scotland!

Scottish Executive

Scottish Parliament

General Register Office for Scotland, where you may view census data

H.L. MacQueen, Scots Law and the Road to the New Ius Commune vol. 4.4 Electronic Journal of Comparative Law (December 2000)

Radio Scotland

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main page

Celt Tool

In archaeology, celt (pron. 'selt') is a term formally used for long thin prehistoric stone or bronze adzes and other axe-like tools and hoes.

Its use came about from a Latin Vulgate misreading of Job 29:24 where the certe in Stylo ferreo, et plumbi lamina, vel certe sculpantur in silice was read as celte. 'Celte' was wrongly assumed to be a type of ancient chisel when in fact it was a mistranslation of 'forever'. Eighteenth century antiquarians then adopted the word for the stone tools they were finding at prehistoric sites.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the term had largely been abandoned by embarrassed archaeologists, who were also beginning to classify the tools into more precise sub-groups. However, its use remains fossilised in a few specific artefact types such as the Danubian Shoe-last celt.

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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Initiation>

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::{{otheruses}} Coming from the Latin, "initiation" implies a beginning. The related term, "initiate", means to begin or start a particular action, Event, Circumstance, or Happening. But it is also an ending as existence on one level drops away in an ascension to the next. An initiation is also a Ceremony by which a person is introduced into a society, or other organized body, especially the rite of admission into a Secret_society or order. Normally an Initiation_rite would imply a shepherding process where those who are at a higher level guide the initiate through a process of greater exposure of knowledge. This may include the revelation of secrets, usually reserved for those at the higher level of understanding. Initiation is a key component of Sant_Mat, Surat_Shabd_Yoga and similar religious Gnosis traditions. It denotes acceptance by the Guru and also implies that the Chela (student or disciple) agrees to the requirements (such as living an ethical lifestyle, meditating, etc.)

Image:Sepik_River_initiation_PNG_1975.JPG Image:Sepik_River_initiations_1975.JPG

== See also == *Rite_of_passage *Hazing *Baptism Category:Cultural_anthropology

Category:Ceremonies Category:Shabd_paths De:Initiation Fr:Initiation He:טקס חניכה

Ja:通過儀礼 Pl:Inicjacja Pt:Iniciação

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coven>

239 captures

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About this capture

""Coven"" or "covan" was originally a late medieval Scots word (c1500) meaning a gathering of any kind according to the Oxford_English_Dictionary. It derives from the Latin root word "convenire" meaning to come together or to gather, which also gave rise to the English word "convene". The first recorded use of it being applied to witches comes from a much later date from 1662 in the witchtrial of Isabel_Gowdie which describes a coven of 13 members. Margaret_Murray used this evidence to claim that all witches across Europe met in groups of thirteen which they called covens. She went on to manipulate the figures in other trials to come to a similar total, though even then she could only come up with eighteen total out of the hundreds of recorded trials. She also provided no evidence the word itself was used outside Scotland at the time of the witchhunts, nor why her ancient prehistoric religion were using a word which of recent date derived from Latin. After Murray popularised the word in the 1920s

Gerald_Gardner adopted it in his works on Wicca hence its modern use in that religion.

== The Coven in modern Wicca == A "coven" is, in brief, a gathering or association of Witches. The number of persons involved may vary: although thirteen has been suggested as the optimum number, any number above and including three can be a coven. Two would usually be referred to as a working couple (in any combination of

sexes.) It is commonly said that a coven larger than thirteen is unwieldy, as group dynamics tend to grow more difficult. The term has been used with both positive and negative connotations, largely dependent on the speaker's view of witches and Witchcraft. In Wicca and similar religions, the term coven implies a gathering similar to that implied by Congregation in Christian parlance. It is composed of a group of believers gathered together for a ceremony of Worship such as Drawing_down_the_Moon. ==Covens in literature and popular culture == An intermediate view is often portrayed in Fantasy stories and popular culture. In this usage, a coven is a gathering of witches to work spells in tandem. Such imagery can be traced back to Renaissance prints depicting witches and to the three 'weird sisters' in Shakespeare's play Macbeth. More orgiastic witches's meetings are also depicted in Robert_Burns's poem Tam_O'Shanter and in Goethe's play Faust. Movie portrayals have included, for example "The Craft" and "COVEN" (pronounced ko ven) (documented in the movie "American_Movie"). ==Covens in a Sanguinarian context== Coven can be a term used to describe a group or community of Sanguinarians, especially those who communicate only over the internet. Its origins almost certainly come from the Wiccan usage of coven. ==External links== * Finding a Coven * Working in a Coven - notes from a lecture *Choosing a Coven by Judy Harrow *Carlford Coven: a coven in Suffolk, England Category:Witchcraft Category:Wicca Fr:Coven Nl:Coven No:Coven

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gardnerian_Wicca

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Gardnerian Wicca

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Gardnerian Wicca is a tradition of the Neopagan religion of Wicca. Gardnerian Wicca is named after Gerald Gardner (1884-1964), a British civil servant who studied magic among other things. He knew and worked with many famous occultists, not the least of which was Aleister Crowley (1875-1947). After his retirement Gardner moved to Christchurch near the New Forest on the south coast of England, where he says he met a group of people who had preserved certain traditional practices. As an amateur folklorist, Gardner was fascinated, and set about reinventing what he described as an ancient, ancestral religion whose remnants he had come upon. He apparently had little ritual material to work with and had to create a good deal of it himself. He seems not to have been confident writing original poetry, and instead borrowed and wove together appropriate material from other artists and occultists, most notably Aleister Crowley, Charles Godfrey Leland's Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches, the Key of Solomon as

published by S.L. MacGregor Mathers, Freemasonry ritual, and Rudyard Kipling, Queen Victoria's Poet Laureate. Gardner's High Priestess, Doreen Valiente (1922-1999) wrote much of the most well-known poetry, including the much-quoted Charge of the Goddess. The core group grew slowly and in utter secrecy as Witchcraft was illegal in Britain at the time. When the Witchcraft Laws were replaced, in 1951, by the Fraudulent Mediums Act, Gerald Gardner went public, initially somewhat cautiously, but during the late 1950's and early 1960's (up until his death in 1964) even courting the attentions of the tabloid press, to the consternation of some of the other members of the tradition. Nevertheless, the increased publicity seems to have allowed Gardnerian Wicca to grow much more rapidly.

The oldest known Gardnerian Wicca coven is the North London coven, which originally met in the Witch's Cottage near the Five Acres naturist club in Brickett's Wood near London; it has operated continuously for over 50 years, since shortly after the end of the Second World War, and has included many leading lights of Gardnerian Wicca including Gerald Gardner, Doreen Valiente, Lois Bourne, and Jack Bracelin.

Some American neopagans regard Gardnerian Wicca as a "fundamentalist" path, in that, at least as often practiced in America, it demands fairly strict adherence to the procedures and principles laid down by Gardner, as well as stringent requirements for initiation. As practiced in England, on the other hand, Gardnerian Wicca is often regarded as a mainstream Wiccan tradition, albeit an old-school one, and as less formal than Alexandrian Wicca.

The most well known Covens of the original Gardnerian lineage are: New Forest, Brickett Wood, Rainbow wood, Isle of Man, Oak Tree, Sparrow, Isis Urania and Druid Oak.

Category: Wiccan traditions

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To "reclaim" is to bring a word back to a more acceptable course. This can have wider implications in the fields of Discourse, and is often used described in terms of personal or socio-political empowerment. === Linguistics === To "reclaim" something is the political process and strategy consisting in re-evaluating and re-appropriating terms that in the dominant culture are used to oppress minorities. Similar to the 'Pride' movements, this process differs because of its provocative elements: derogatory terms come to acquire positive meaning in the tight circle of the literati, while they keep their negative connotations outside of it. Michel_Foucault discusses this idea as a 'reverse discourse' in his "History_of_Sexuality: Volume I." The use of these terms by people who are not members of that group tends to remain viewed as strongly derogatory. Reclaimed words include * 'Nigger' by the black movement * 'Bitch', 'Cunt' and 'Feminazi' by the Feminist movement * 'Slut', and 'Slag' by Promiscuous, Sexual_liberation, Polygamous and Polyamorous affiliates. * 'Dyke', 'Poof', 'Queer', and 'faggot' by the LGBT movements * 'Crip' and 'Gimp' by people with Disabilities * 'Redneck' by southern political movements, especially conservative movements * 'Jesus_freak' by Christians, and especially Christian teens === Neopaganism === "Reclaiming" is a group of women and men whose stated aim is to unify spirit and action towards rebuilding pagan ritual and community. It originated in the Bay Area of California, blending the influences of Victor and Cora Anderson's Feri_Tradition of Witchcraft, Dianic Witchcraft as taught by Z. Budapest, and the feminist, peace, and environmental movements. The tradition's cofounder is Starhawk (author of "The Spiral Dance") ==See also==

*Reclaim_the_Streets ==External links== *www.reclaiming.org {{org-stub}}

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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Witchcraft>

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Eo:Kategorioj:_Novpaganismo It:Categoria:Neopaganesimo
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Welcome to Reclaiming: a Community of People, a Tradition of Witchcraft, and a 501(c)3 non-profit Religious Organization in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Reclaiming is a community of women and men working to unify spirit and politics. Our vision is rooted in the religion and magic of the Goddess, the Immanent Life Force. We see our work as teaching and making magic; the art of empowering ourselves and each other. In our classes, workshops, and public rituals, we train our voices, bodies, energy, intuition, and minds. We use the skills we learn to deepen our strength, both as individuals and as community, to voice our concerns about the world in which we live, and bring to birth a vision of a new culture.

Directory: About Reclaiming :: Find Us Worldwide :: Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine :: Bay Area Classes & Events :: Bay Area Public Rituals :: Resources, Personal & Political :: How to Reach Us

Breaking News

Reclaiming CDs - Order Online | 2006 Reclaiming Witchcamps | Solstice Rituals in Bay Area, Worldwide

New at ReclaimingQuarterly.org

Summer RQ - Tarot | Pagan Cluster in New Orleans (updated) | Listen to Reclaiming chants online!

About Reclaiming:

Everything you wanted to know about Reclaiming, including our structure, history, and more. Articles on witchcraft, ritual etiquette, and other writings by Reclaiming community members are here, too. Go to "About Reclaiming".

Find Us Worldwide:

Looking for Reclaiming in your area, outside of San Francisco? These pages will help you find a local group or Witch Camp, subscribe to community or special interest e-mail lists, and obtain information regarding teachers willing to help you establish your own community. Go to "Find Us Worldwide".

Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine:

Our locally produced, all-volunteer maintained, quarterly published magazine. Reclaiming Quarterly's focus is both Bay Area specific and world-wide, with contributing writers such as Starhawk, T. Thorn Coyle, and more. You can subscribe on-line! Go to "Reclaiming Quarterly Magazine".

Bay Area Classes & Events:

The San Francisco Bay Area hosts many classes, workshops and other offerings by Reclaiming community members, including Witch Camp. Not from the Bay Area? See "Find Us Worldwide" for happenings around the United States and the rest of the world,

plus links to communities near you. Go to "Classes & Events".

Bay Area Public Rituals:

Open to the public, the San Francisco Bay Area hosts a wealth of celebrations throughout the Wheel of the Year. Go to "Bay Area Public Rituals".

Resources - Personal & Political:

Within these pages, you can find pagan Death & Dying resources, the El Salvador Friendship Fund, recommended books & tapes, and more. Go to "Resources - Personal & Political".

How to Reach Us:

Information on how to contact us and other specific Bay Area Reclaiming personalities, plus how to submit information to the Quarterly & Webspinners regarding events. Go to "How to Reach Us".

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http://www.faerywolf.com/essay_whatisFeri.htm

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About this capture

What is the F(a)eri(e) Tradition?

by Storm Faerywolf

I sit in a circle of my own design, making call to the powers that surround and guard us. I listen for their answer and from beyond the firelight it comes. Forces from the outer darkness make themselves known to me; Dian na Glas, the Blue God, comes with childlike vigor, dancing silken spirals, the music of the spheres alive in his footsteps. Mari, full-breasted and powerful, complete and bountiful, emerges from within my cells, and calls to me, asking that I walk with Her feet.

Through my breath, I commune. My fetch, pulsing, glowing, delicate and fierce, throbs with power, it's undulating rhythm lulling me into a place where I know power. The Blue God- no longer separate from myself- flows like silver water from the depths of my GodSelf to quench the thirst of my souls, bringing with His sweet nectar the drunkenness of the Divine, and I dance. I dance in circles and rejoin the spinning of the universe with each step. I am touched by the Gods, and my dance is theirs.

When I first heard of the F(a)eri(e) tradition of witchcraft, it was in the pages of Starhawk's book *The Spiral Dance*. I remember being almost entranced by the (brief) description of the Blue God, the laughing god of love, as she described him, wondering about his stories, his touch, and longing to look upon his face. For me there was a connection. Although I couldn't have known it then, I was touched by His power; this Deity who dances in the springtime of the soul. It was this touch that eventually led me to find a teacher and to study the wild road we call Feri.

When listening to the stories of others I find certain ideas that are commonly used to describe personal experiences of the tradition. Of the tradition itself, it is often referred to as a "Chaos" tradition, referring in part perhaps to our particular relationship to the Star Goddess, the raging cosmos pregnant with possibility. Being a "left hand path" we embrace the fullest spectrum of possibility; we bask in the sunlight of the body, and revel in the darkness of the soul. The natural state of the soul unfettered by conditioning and restraint is sometimes referred to as "The Black Heart of Innocence", and is a phrase that poetically evokes the raw-ness of pure experience, forming the basis of what may be called the Feri perspective. Far from being a mental construct, this is a personal relationship to the universe, a relationship which does not seek to contain or even necessarily to define our experience with it. At it's core it is simple. We open, and the power flows through us, taking what form it will. It is a form of shamanism in the truest sense of the word.

In a tradition that is inherently shamanic, practitioners draw inspiration from many sources. Whether these are an established liturgy, the appearance of a certain plant or animal, a ritual given by a teacher, or a song learned while in trance, they do not in and of themselves define the practice as a whole. It is the experiential perspective relationship to them that is the unifying factor, and it is this relationship with which we are most concerned.

We are guided by those beings who are attached to this tradition: the Guardians, the Feri Gods, and join with them in spirit, allowing them to move through us, changing us forever. Our view that the Gods are real (as opposed to being simply psychological constructs or metaphor, as seen in many branches of the modern Craft) reflects our relationship with them, revealing it to be both personal and dynamic. When we call on our Gods, and they move through us, we have been changed even to our deepest levels. We know, in our bodies, the joy of Nimue at the Summer Solstice, or the dark power of the Arddu in the dead of winter's night.

Unlike most other branches of modern witchcraft Feri is not a safe tradition. As seekers into the outer dark, bringing only our wits with us into these uncharted territories of the spirit, we find ourselves most often vulnerable and alone. Searching for avenues to power and healing for both ourselves and for the land, we scratch and claw our way through ourselves, being confronted by our demons, our fears, and our true desires. Through preparation, both psychological and spiritual, we are taught how to touch the source of the Faerie power, and how to handle it once we have.

Another distinguishing factor of our path is initiation through the passing and use of the Faerie current of power. When we are initiated we are connected to the living current of energy that is unique to the tradition. We become conscious channels, allowing it to flow through us and into the world around us. This is the true function of any priest/ess: to be a mediator of universal power.

But what is the Feri tradition? How do we know when we are practicing Feri or we have moved into another realm? If Feri asserts personal experience over established liturgy, then how can we be certain that we, as a whole, are even practicing the same thing?

It has been suggested, in some circles, that material which varies from the original (or current) teachings of Victor Anderson is not part of the actual tradition. Being the GrandMaster of Feri, the initiatory lineage of each practitioner traces ultimately back to him. He is, in one sense, the origin of our tradition, being responsible for bringing it into the world at large, through his teaching and training of others who have carried the power outward to share with even more. Does this mean that material and insights created and used by other initiates of Feri should be viewed as being separate from the tradition itself? If we are practicing a tradition that is at its core an energetic relationship with the Feri power/Deities, then we cannot expect the outer forms to remain unchanged if we want the tradition to evolve and flourish. By asserting that we must always use the same outer form constitutes a type of dogmatic thinking that is dangerous in a shamanic tradition. To do so requires that we invalidate the unique experiences that we have when mediating the Gods; powers that are very real and alive.

The Feri power when mediated into the world through each of us, takes on other forms as deemed by the power, the Deities, and of course the individual practitioner themselves. To expect it to always conform to earlier forms/teachings is to deny its very real life-force; its ability to evolve as we each come to understand its beauty and simple complexity. Without the outer forms of ritual, invocation, and symbolism, we are left with only one thing that defines us as Feri: our relationship with the energetic current. It is this point that marks the validity of our tradition; we are Feri because we are of Feri; we have been remade into willing vessels of its' power. It must, by its deeply personal nature, touch each of us differently. It is these differences which, I believe, validate the path, not detract from it. By sharing our experience and perspectives with each other we become stronger for it. May we have the courage to always do so.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #1.

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BlueGod of the silken touches,
dancing circles
dreaming bliss,
alluring, tempting,
love-struck falling,
blessed is he
who tastes your kiss.

"In the Presence of the BlueGod" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf

From the womb of Mother Night,
The first star born to bring forth light
Fell to earth on angel's wings,
Watching, waiting, laughing, singing,
Strutting in His peacock dance,
Calling down the wild-eyed trance,
Shaking heaven, tearing hell,
A rising serpent from the well.

"BlueGod and the Source of Ecstasy" ©2000 Storm Faerywolf.

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From beyond the firelight the forces of the Outer Dark beckon to us in the form of intuition and dream. Like rising smoke they dance and flicker before our eyes, only to fade into obscurity and disbelief.

How many of us have had experiences with "The Weird", only to turn our backs and reassure ourselves that it was only a passing fancy, a hallucination, our imagination? Better yet, how many of us have embraced the source of the Mystery, making ourselves the willing vessel for its' power that it may flow freely into the world touching the souls of

those around us?

At this point in history, can we afford to do any less?

Basic Information- The witches' world view, the philosophy of Paganism, and general magickal theory.

Feri Tradition- A collection of my Feri related articles and art.

Meditations- Trance Journeys written for various occasions.

Essays- A collection of articles that I wrote on a variety of Craft related topics.

Spellcraft- A listing of spells that I wrote for various purposes.

Reading List- My current selection of recommended reading for my students.

My altar, 2000.

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About this capture

Defining Witchcraft- Some of my ideas on the Craft, and an explanation of some differences to modern Wicca.

Beginning of Magick- A short essay on what it really takes to perform spells.

Tools- A description of some of the symbolic ritual tools used in neo-pagan witchcraft.

Casting the Circle -The definition of sacred space.

Invoking the Elements -Identification with the natural forces of the Universe.

The Iron Pentacle- An essay on one of the major teaching tools of the Feri tradition.

Cleansing -The purification, or re-alignment of one's personal energy.

Protection -The settings of wards, or barriers.

A favorite image of Deity amongst Witches, Baphomet represents dynamic polarity and the spirituality of the primal. (Image ©2003 Storm Faerywolf)

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About this capture
Defining Witchcraft
by Storm Faerywolf

"Mother darksome and divine
Mine the scourge and mine the kiss.
Five-point star of life & bliss,
Here I charge ye in this sign." -Doreen Valiente, The Charge of the Goddess, verse
version
"Eight words the Wiccan Rede fulfill,
'An it harm none, do what thou will.'" -From The Wiccan Rede, traditional dogma of
the Wiccan traditions of witchcraft
"And thou shalt be the first of witches known;

And thou shalt be the first of all i' the world;
And thou shalt teach the art of poisoning..." -Charles G. Leland, Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches

Witchcraft is one of those terms that defies a complete definition. It is generally reported that Witchcraft is the survival of pre-Christian European pagan religious traditions that went underground during the Inquisition. Being forced into secrecy, the tradition was said to be passed down through families, each of which possessed only fragments of the once great magical priest/esshood. And in secret it remained until the 1954 publication of Gerald Gardner's book 'Witchcraft Today', the first book written from the inside; by a self avowed Witch. Witchcraft, it was said, was the misunderstood last survival of an ancient pagan fertility cult honoring the Life Giving Mother Goddess, and Her consort the Horned God of the Hunt. Called 'Wicca' (an Old English word coming from the root word wic, meaning 'to bend or to shape') practitioners would celebrate the turning of the seasons, and the cycles of the moon, meeting in the cover of darkness to delve into the forbidden waters of magick that they might bend the rivers of fate, and shape reality."The Conjuraton" ©2003 Storm Faerywolf

Brought into the public light, Wicca has asserted itself as the one true face of Witchcraft. This is not entirely true. It is important to note that prior to the publication of Gardner's book, the word 'wicca' had been used in Old English to describe a male practitioner of a sorcery tradition but not the tradition itself. In this respect, 'Wicca' is a new religion, having been synthesized by Gardner from older elements, some of which were authentic pagan magickal practices based on anthropological evidence at the time. It is a new religion with very old roots. But witchcraft is more than just a religion.

In fact witchcraft, in it's purest form, isn't a religion at all. Like other forms of shamanism, it is a collection of techniques for altering human consciousness, usually for the purpose of imposing change, either in the world or in the self. These are usually aimed at refining the practitioner's perception of reality and might consist of certain types of chanting, drumming, dancing, meditations, herbal potions, rituals, etc., each differing due to tradition or teaching, but in and of themselves do not represent a religious practice. They can, however, lead one to that place. 'Wicca', on the other hand, is a modern religion that utilizes witchcraft (an archaic and magickal perception of the universe) and frames it in the religious mythologies of the Mother Goddess, forming a tightly woven mix of magickal practice with religious devotion.

Being a true spiritual system, witchcraft lends the practitioner a deepened spiritual awareness, not through the memorization of liturgy or ritual, but through the direct experience of universal power. This power, when confronted directly, dredges up from our primal core a window into our deepest fears, our highest joys, and our strongest desires. It brings our very sense of self into question and, by proxy, our sense of reality as well. It exposes our secret selves to ourselves and, more importantly, it allows us to nurture and tend our inner landscapes; to garden our souls.

What witchcraft doesn't do is set forth a code of conduct for its followers. It is inherently

neutral, having no inclination towards anything resembling human moralities. It is a power, plain and simple, one that can heal and one that can burn. It exists, just as the stars exist, needing no justification from outside to validate or even white-wash its place in the universe. It is the use of this power which has moral implications. It is a tool, like a hammer that can build a house or crush a skull.

The applied use of witchcraft, however, tends to foster a sense of interdependence with the world, an experiential realization of the universal holism which lies at the heart of every spiritual system on the planet, throughout time, throughout culture: we are all one.

So while religious systems generally seek to impose morality from outside the self, we see that spiritual systems tend to foster a different kind of moral behavior in its adherents by altering ones internal relationship with self and, by extension, the outside world. It is precisely this change from within that is the hallmark of its power.

The form of the Craft that I teach and write about is inspired in part by the Feri/Faery tradition of witchcraft as it has been taught to me. As it is a fiercely personal path my practices will most likely differ from other practitioners of the tradition. It is a spiritual practice aimed at achieving an energetic balance within the self while fostering a healthy relationship with the land on which we live. It is not Wicca though certain elements are similar. Others differ completely.

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The Beginning of Magick
by Storm Faerywolf
Many introductory books on magick and meditation discuss the importance of the meditative technique known as Grounding. Simply put, "Grounding" is an exercise

designed to allow the human energy-body (or aura, if you prefer) to connect with the energy-body of the Earth. This connection forms the basis for an energetic relationship that is both beneficial and protective. When grounded we are in a state of hyper relaxation; a sort of energized calmness that allows deeper, and safer access to our Power, our psychic natures. It allows us to draw energy from the Earth, and helps to prevent harmful energies from disrupting our psychic balance. It is an important first step.

It is a process that I find myself returning to again and again. I have had time while writing material for my classes, as well as in my own private studies, to experience more deeply some of the energetic subtleties that are part of Grounding and Trance.

Most books that describe Grounding techniques focus mainly on visualization. This is an important skill, but far less important than feeling.

Feeling is an energetic sense that can be described as being somewhere between tactile sensation and thought. An example of this would be the memory of a physical sensation; you're not remembering it in your physical body, but its not quite just a memory in your head either. You are Feeling it in your energy-body.

It is through the controlled use of this perceptive skill that we are able to consciously direct the flows of energy, our own or otherwise. What follows is a very simple exercise, but one that is meant to be used on a consistent basis. You will find that the visual aspect of this meditation is minimal. Feel free to change it completely to suit your needs. What is stressed here is the energetic sense, the feeling of the steps involved.

. . .

Sit or stand in a comfortable position so that your back is straight. If standing, bend your knees slightly so as not to block the energy flow. Take in a few slow deep breaths through the nose, slowing even more on the exhale.

Focus your attention on your Power center, a space just below your navel, in the center of your body. Imagine, as you continue to breathe, that your Power is emerging from this space in the form of a light. Take some time to feel this Power as it grows with your breath. If you are new to meditation you may need to practice this first step several times until the sensation is definite.

Now, continuing to breathe deeply, imagine that your Power is elongating downward in the form of a cord, pressing straight down through your physical body and down into the Earth. Really take your time to feel this. The sensation should be as if the cord were an extension of your body, of your awareness. You should notice how your own personal energy feels as your cord travels deeper into the ground. Allow this cord to travel downward with your breath until it reaches the center of the Earth. Feel this center as a great vortex of Power that your cord merges with. Imagine that as your cord is anchored into place, it gets pulled tight, pulling you slightly closer to the Earth's center. When you have achieved this, you may then draw from the Earth's Power by pulling it up through

your cord, feeling it as it rises to meet your body. Be aware of how it feels when it enters your body and allow it to fill both your physical body, and your aura. Again, give yourself plenty of time in order to really feel the energy. When you feel that you have done enough, gently remind yourself of the place in which you are meditating, remembering the room you are in. Then open your eyes.

When practiced consistently, this exercise will begin to deepen your perceptual skills so that you may begin to experience other types of energies. Experiment with different colors and visualization aids to see what works best for you. (Many imagine that they are in the form of a tree, whose taproot is the energy cord.) Try moving the energy in different ways. See if you can move it through your body and back into the Earth again. When these simple skills have been mastered you can then begin to create new forms for the energy to take, such as moving the energy through your hands and into an object, or from your Power center and into a star. The only limit is your imagination.

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In order to understand the rituals and magick as presented in the majority of modern witchcraft, it is important to examine the symbolism and use of various working tools. What follows is a list of my own correspondences for each of the major (and in a few cases, minor) tools of the Craft. I should point out that certain elemental and God/dess associations, differ between various traditions, and that there is no one correct way to define the energies within these symbols, for the gift of the Gods is the diversity in life.

Athamé A double edged knife symbolizing the dual nature of our actions, used to direct energy, particularly in casting of the circle. The athamé is placed in the south, and is associated with the element of fire, representing the will. A phallic symbol, and thus one of the Horned God as well.

Book of Shadows A magickal journal kept by a witch, containing spells, invocations, herbal recipes, dreams, records of meditational exercises and ritual notes. Sometimes it is written in runes or another magickal script.

Cauldron A large pot that may contain brews, candles, spellworkings, or a fire. Associated with the Cauldron of Cerridwen, an ancient symbol of universal transformation. Its' element is that of spirit, and its direction is the center.

Chalice A goblet or cup that holds refreshment during ritual. The chalice is placed in the west, associated with the element of water, and thus the emotions. A symbol of the Goddess and Her womb, holding the waters of life.

Pentacle A disc of metal, wood, or clay with perhaps a pentagram and various other symbols inscribed on it. It is usually seen as being a symbol of the north, and the element of earth. Used to charge objects, such as cakes and wine, or used as a symbol of protection. Used for assisting one return from a deep trance.

Sword Similar to the athamé, the sword is also used to direct energy and to cast a circle, although usually in a coven setting as opposed to a solitary one. The sword is also much more protective than the athamé, and so is a favored tool for defensive magick amongst witches who own one.

Wand This is a stick or small branch that is used to direct energy (much like the athamé). It is placed in the east with the element of air. Sometimes used to invoke the Goddess and the God, and in spellcasting. Represents the focused will.

It should be understood that none of the tools mentioned above are required for the formulation of magick or ritual. The only tool necessary is the self, properly prepared through training. The tools are used as symbolic triggers for our Power, nothing more. It would be unwise, however, to dismiss their importance in magickal operations. By meditating on the significance of each tool, varying insights, emotions, visions, may emerge spurring you further on your path. Each time we use a tool in ritual, it's significance to our fetch (that part of our soul structure that is childlike, primal, pre-verbal, and through which magick is channeled) is strengthened, deepening it's power. After working with the tools to any level of proficiency, one will find increased

magickal ability, and control of that ability, with or without the presence of working tools.

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About this capture

The ritual structure used by the vast majority of modern witches begins with the cleansing and definition of ceremonial space. This usually, though not always, involves the ritualized designation of the working area and is usually referred to as "Casting the Circle". In short, this is done by psychically manipulating one's personal power so as to envelope the working area and the participants involved. In a group setting this is done by everyone present, although more often the priest/ess or other representative will take the active role, acting as a unifying channel for the group's energy.

In our tradition, we cast a circle for various reasons. The first and most obvious even to skeptics would be the psychological effect of removing ourselves from ordinary awareness. This serves to allow us access to our deeper selves, from where the power comes. Additionally it can be used to contain the power raised in a ritual until the moment it reaches its' highest point, at which time the collective force is released. It can also be used for protective purposes, acting like a barrier against negative energies, spirits, thought-forms, etc. I find it necessary to add that a ritual circle is NOT a requirement for the wielding of magick. I seldom cast a circle prior to spellworking, but prefer a circle to be cast when gathering in a group, or for more 'ritual' activities, such as the celebration of a Sabbat, or other special working.

When we walk the perimeter of our working circle we, if properly done, have entered

into a type of trance that enables us to merge with, and to some extent control, the universal energies around us. It is in this state that we channel our energy (and the energies of other working participants, if present) into forming a psychic boundary that defines the ritual area.

Below, I give a very basic formula for the casting of a circle. Practice with it. See how it feels. Feel free to elaborate on it, or even change it completely, at your discretion.

First, walking widdershins (counter-clockwise) around the circle area, begin to sprinkle some salt or salted water to purify the area. Visualize and feel this as a cleansing fluid that transforms any negative energy, thoughts, or emotions, into a positive working force. You may wish to say something like:

By the powers of earth and water,
be cleansed!
Debris of spirit, senseless doubt, unruly thoughts,
Begone!
You are banished from this place.
This is my will, So Must It Be!

Now that the ritual space has been purified (with earth and water), we can begin to set up the circle. The circle itself need not be marked out on the floor, although many find this an enjoyable method. Light some incense (element of fire and air), thus purifying the circle-space with the four elements.

Beginning in the North (Different traditions vary on this. Feel free to use your own judgment.) Holding your athamé, blade outwards, (or if you prefer you may simply use your hands) begin to cast the circle by visualizing a blue flame, emanating from the blade, as you walk deosil (clockwise) around the circle area, and ending again in the North. (You might optionally wish to recite a poem as a circle invocation. There is an alternate invocation located [HERE](#).) See and feel the energy as a band of vibrant power hanging in the air around the area before it expands into a sphere or "egg" enveloping the work space. You may then wish to say an affirming statement like:

The circle is cast.
We walk between the worlds.

Now that the boundary has been erected, it is custom to attune to the elemental powers. This is done through a series of visualizations, recitation of poetry, and perhaps singing or dancing. When the elemental power has been invoked, a pentagram (five pointed star) can be traced in the air as shown below:

It is visualized in the appropriate color representing the element and is seen as a portal into the pure energetic realm of the element in question. After this is done, the Goddess, and then the God are invoked to share our power with them and vice versa, charging the ritual with their energies.

It is important to point out that once the circle is cast, no one is usually allowed to enter or leave. It is generally thought that to do so would break the circle, dispersing the energy, tearing the boundaries. If someone does need to leave, however, a doorway can be cut into the circle with the athamé on the perimeter, creating a portal. A pentagram can then be traced over the doorway to re-seal it.

The circle will usually remain until it is grounded or dispersed.

When the ritual is ended, the ritual space needs to be dispersed, returning the energies to their realms of origin. This can be done by several methods. One is to walk widdershins around the circle and "suck up" the blue flame back into the athamé, so as to 'uncast' the circle. Another is to visualize the energy as sinking down into the earth, where it is used by the earth. You may wish to experiment with methods of your own. One of my favorite methods is to first thank the elements:

We give thanks to (Spirit, Earth, Water, Fire, Air),
for watching over our rite.
Stay if you will,
Go if you must.
Blessed be.

Then the circle can be dispersed by raising the athamé to the sky, then pointing it down and touching the ground. Visualize the circles' energy rushing inward on your breath, sinking into your body as you open your arms wide and say:

The circle is open, but unbroken.
Blessed be.

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About this capture

by Storm Faerywolf

In witchcraft, the energy that we draw from during ritual or spellcasting, is anything but supernatural. Witches have a unique world-view which enables us to see the immanent life-force, usually referred to as the Goddess, as a constant flow of energy that is not set apart from the natural world, but is instead seen quite literally as the natural world itself. This universal energy is seen and felt in all things and places, and is "tapped into" (i.e. brought into our awareness) when performing ritual so as to charge the magick with potency.

The model of the five elements can be thought of as a spiritual map that reveals the landscape of our souls. By relating our psyche to the land around us, we begin to make a shift into living in harmony with the natural world. This relationship between our spirit and the cosmos forms the basis for the magickal worldview which enables us to live a life of power. When we are consciously aware of the air in our lungs, or the passion in our hearts, we have begun to live more fully.

When working with the elements, both in meditation and in direct experience, aspects of ourselves begin to resonate and are brought to the forward of our awareness. This can lead to a better understanding of the self, and by extension to an increased command of psychic talents. Often we will find obstacles, psychological or otherwise, blocking our path. Sometimes these can be disturbing or even frightening experiences, revealing to us our deepest fears that we have tried subconsciously and determinedly bury into extinction. Only by confronting and embodying these fears can we begin to truly grow, and indeed by avoiding them we run the very real risk of causing ourselves harm.

When used intentionally and consistently, the model of the elements serves as a spiritual compass, pointing us in the right directions to find exactly where in our inner worlds we need healing or change, reflection or celebration, and then leading us safely back home again in our center.

What follows is a list of correspondences for the five directions and their associated

elements. I have included a version of the directional invocations as a guideline for writing your own. (An alternate version appears [HERE](#).)

The East corresponds with the element of Air, representing the mind, intellect, the ability to reason, the power to Know. It's time is first morning light in the springtime, Its' color is yellow and its' tool is the wand.

Hail Guardians of the East,
I summon the powers of Air!
Windswept meadow,
Breath of life,
Fantastic torrent removing strife,
With Clarity, the power to Know,
We invoke you!

(Participants should take a moment to focus on their breath, feeling the powers of air in their lungs and body while examining the idea of clarity and knowing.)

By the air that is Her breath,
Be with us now!

The South corresponds to the element of Fire, representing passion, energy, and the powers of fierce change, and Will. It's time is high noon in the summertime. Its' color is red, and its tools are the athamé and the sword.

Hail Guardians of the South,
I summon the powers of Fire!
Blazing flame,
Crackling fire,
The quickened pulse of heart's desire,
With Energy, the power of Will,
We invoke you!

(Participants may dance vigorously or make energetic noise, raising energy.)

By the fire that is Her spirit,

Be with us now!

The West corresponds to the element of Water, representing the Deep self, emotions, intuition, and the power to Dare. Its time is the twilight of sunset in the autumn. Its' color is the blue of the oceans, and its' tool is the chalice.

Hail Guardians of the West,
I summon the powers of Water!
Rushing stream,
Vast, dark ocean,
Poetry of the soul in motion,
With Intuition, feeling, the power to Dare,
We invoke you!

(Dancing languidly or simply calling up old emotions may be utilized here.)

By the Waters of Her womb,
Be with us now!

The North corresponds to the element of Earth, representing the powers of stability, birth, death, and the power to keep Silent. Its time is midnight in the dead of winter. Its' colors are green and black, and its' primary tool is the pentacle.

Hail Guardians of the North,
We summon the powers of Earth!
Cave of darkness,
Standing stone,
the celebration of flesh and bone,
With Stillness, the power of silence,
We invoke you!

(A strong moment of silence, feeling the body.)

By the Earth that is Her body,
Be with us now!

Spirit/Ether/Force

The Center corresponds to the element of Spirit, Ether, or Force, and represents the Deep Self in harmonic resonance with the other two layers of the human soul, namely Talking Self, and the fetch. It is that which connects the directions at the center, immanence, transcendence, and life which survives death. Its' colors are violet, white, or black, and its' tool is the cauldron, symbol of transformation.

As above, so below.
As within, so without.
Four stars in this place be,
Combined to call the fifth to me!
Circumference and center,
Woven together,
To make the circle complete!

(Imagine the energies of the four elemental powers combining creating a dynamic force that spins, like a top, with its' axis being the center of the circle. Participants may wish to dance in a circle to join in this flow of power.)

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The Iron Pentacle:
Understanding the Harmonics of Consciousness
by Storm Faerywolf

From sex to pride,
from pride to self,
from self to power,

from power to passion
from passion to sex,
the gate is formed.
By my will the gate is opened.
Blessed be.

onsidered to be a foundational exercise of the Feri, the Iron Pentacle has proven to be a powerful symbol of the inner-work that is stressed so strongly in our tradition. Usually taught to students at or near the beginning of their training in order to provide a symbolic container for the work to come, the pentacle quickly becomes a personal mandala for the student, an energetic map that can lend important clues as to where we are wasting our energy, and provide us opportunities to heal imbalances in our inner selves. It is a talisman of great power. Briefly, the points can be understood as follows:

The point of Sex conceptually represents the creative power of the Universe. It is both polarity and resonance within the current of Divine energy. It is that point of orgasm in which we open to the Universal dance and participate in its creation and in its destruction within each moment.

The point of Pride is our recognition of our own self-worth and the ability to live fully without reservation, allowing our true nature to shine outward while not giving in to the ego's temptation to compare ourselves to others. It is complete innocence, living fully and unabashedly in the moment.

Self represents our full knowledge of our own potential as well as our limitations along with the knowledge of who we are in relation to others and the Universe at large.

Power is the balanced outpouring of our whole being; the focused harmony of all five points in the pentacle which allows us greater access to our own deep potential. It is the projection of ourselves into the world that causes change, that makes magick. It is never manipulative, for true power exists in its own right and finds revelry in co-operative relationships with other beings and points of view.

Passion is our ability to be open to the fullest experience of feeling, whether that be of the highest bliss, or of the deepest depression. It is the true embodiment of ecstasy.

Taken individually, the points on our pentacle represent important aspects of our consciousness that are normally interpreted in a negative light from the standpoint of mainstream society. Even in those times when an energetic relationship to the conceptual point on the pentacle is one that is encouraged by the mainstream, we find the relationship is usually an unhealthy one. One needs only look to the prevalence of sexual imagery in modern advertising, and the unrealistic expectations that it encourages, for an example of this. Our negative relationships are formed and reinforced each time we compare our bodies to those we see in a magazine, each time

we feel “selfish” for accepting a compliment or taking pride in our work, and each time we automatically equate power with corruption.

By restructuring our relationships to these concepts we can begin to balance our world-view through the removal of the negative preconceptions already firmly in place within our psyches. This allows us deeper access to our authentic selves unhindered by cultural conditioning, a state poetically referred to in our tradition as “The Black Heart of Innocence”. ©2003 Storm Faerywolf

It is from this space, this magnificent state of being, that magick is made. Only when we are free from our irrational fears can we begin to truly live, and it is precisely this that the Gods call for us to do. In order to mediate real power into the world (the true function of any priest or priestess) we must first be made pure; we must come to terms with ourselves for exactly who and what we are, and in the face of this truth, begin to live it fully. Easier said than done.

Each point on the pentacle represents a particular wavelength of consciousness that, even when in isolation from the others, is an invaluable aid to the cleansing and development of the psyche. By connecting meditatively to each point, we can begin to discern how its conceptual power flows through us individually, giving us opportunities to notice how we are affected. When I experience the conceptual energy of Pride, for example, I am faced with the possibility of an unhindered boundless wave of self acceptance and love, an experience that, when taken in the greater context of everyday awareness, leaves me with the experiential understanding of how well I am or am not actualizing such acceptance within my own life. If I am living from my heart center, then I am validated in that experience. If I am not, then I am reminded of that center, and encouraged, by example, to allow my energies to flow freely, thus cultivating that sense of pride that I am connecting to.

When used early on in training, it is common to meditate on each point in succession, gaining speed with each pass until the conscious mind can no longer attach itself to any one particular concept, blurring them into one flow of power. From Sex, to Pride, to Self, to Power, to Passion, and back to Sex, the points themselves become energetic markers, like bands of color in the spectrum, that stand out in the midst of the greater force, and yet are a necessary part of that force, lending to the experience rather than distracting from it.

When taken together, the points on the Iron Pentacle create a kind of harmony, not unlike the voices in a choir, that is greater than the sum of its parts. The five conceptual points of our pentacle interlock to create a kind of “psychic gateway” that leads us deeper into the realms of Faery, and into our own power. When we have actualized each point within ourselves, and are able to maintain a simultaneous connection to each of them and their relationships to each other within our consciousness, then we have embarked upon the remarkable journey: We have made the decision to abandon those negative traits forced upon us by the larger society in favor of a healthy relationship to ourselves, and have taken the first real step towards claiming our Divine birthright: We have decided to become more fully human.

But the question must be posed: Why in a shamanic tradition must we focus on tools and tricks that are obviously centered around affecting the psychological well-being of the student? Why not simply have the student enter into therapy and leave the psyche to the psychologists and the witchcraft to the witches?

It would be unwise to think that the realms of the psychological, the spiritual, and the magickal do not, at the very least, intersect. Much of the training work utilized in many of the branches that teach Feri today bear a striking resemblance to deep therapeutic techniques. Breathing exercises, controlled relaxation, and guided introspection are all techniques that are utilized in both therapy and in modern witchcraft, so what, if anything, makes them different?

One difference is the deep spiritual connection of the community at large. In the presence of a teacher the Iron Pentacle becomes a connection point the student has to the greater Feri community, a symbol of how our diverse energies are interconnected and how they can flow together to form a unified working whole. Even if we each have a different understanding of the conceptual points, we have the work itself in common which leads us to a greater kinship with each other, as witches of the Feri clan. The fact that we each may have been taught differently on the subject merely reinforces the significance of the work to the individual; for the power to remain authentic it must, by definition, change from person to person to reflect the psychic make-up of the individual. When confronted with real power, real results occur. The Iron Pentacle, as a working tool, is a beginning point for understanding the Feri reality. For years practitioners of Feri have used these techniques, with much success, and have revised them to suit their individual needs as practicality demands. When I practice the Iron Pentacle I am filled with the knowledge that this is a path that other practitioners have embarked upon; other Feri have used these signposts in order to better understand their relationship to our Gods, the Universe, and themselves. When I practice, I am in good company.

Another major difference is in the very nature of the powers that we, as Feri, are dealing with. The Gods, Goddesses, Guardians, spirits, and powers that we are working with are real and not simply in a metaphorical sense as is seen in many modern traditions of the Craft. When I call upon the Gods they show up, providing me with perspectives that I was previously unaware of, or even leading me into situations where I have opportunity to claim and refine my power, my perceptual relationship to the universe.

In my opinion the exercises utilized in the Feri training are (for the right individual) much more powerful in effect than the standard therapeutic model. In addition to being a more direct way to deal with issues and complexes within the psyche, the magickal model enables the student to develop control of their relationship to their environment, and more importantly, provides an experiential understanding of how the world really works. Instead of just reinforcing the old paradigm of separateness, the magickal model does away with such nonsense and instills the understanding of interconnectedness as an experiential reality.

In light of all of this, the Iron Pentacle is, in one sense, a reminder of how that interconnectedness works on a personal level, thus bringing that understanding out into the world at large.

For many modern witches the symbol of the pentagram with it's five interlocking points has come to represent the interconnected forces of the five natural elemental principals of the Universe working in harmony. It is a reminder that these forces exist in relation to each other, each serving a unique purpose and yet are interdependent with each other, each relying on the next for holistic balance to be achieved.

The shape of the pentacle with one point upwards is roughly in the shape of the human body with arms and legs outstretched. With this in mind we are reminded of the holographic nature of reality, the microcosm/macrocosm: the idea that the very big is contained within the very small. In each of us exists an energetic map for the entire universe.

The Iron Pentacle takes full advantage of this symbolism providing a framework for grounding the conceptual energy into the human body. While focusing on the points in succession, the energy is generally felt within the body beginning with the point of Sex at the center of the forehead, Pride at the right foot, Self at the left hand, Power at the right hand, and finally Passion at the left foot. By running energy between these points we are able to bring the power of the Pentacle into our bodies in an attempt to free ourselves of blocks that we may possess that serve to hinder our growth.

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The pentacle is a way to begin to understand the universe in a personal way, as well as a means to understand ourselves, opening the gate to the Mystery and giving us access to the Star Goddess, the Primordial state of being. Like the iron in our blood, it is the foundation of our lives as well as our magick. As witches of the Feri Craft we are the holders of a sacred key which unlocks nothing less than our true potential, not only as witches but as fully realized human beings. With every breath we learn more about what that may be for each of us.

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Personal Cleansing Rite #1

Items:

A cup of spring water

A white candle

Ground and Center. Begin to feel inner power. Light candle with the intention to purify yourself. Allow the light of the candle to resonate with your own power, making both stronger. Pick up the cup and hold it at heart level. Breathe deeply, feeling the light of the candle permeate the water... Feel your heart open and imagine that you are forming a circuit of power with the candle flame, flowing through the cup of water. "See" the water glow with that power. Allow it to become charged with power. Take three deep breaths and then drink the water, feeling it wash away all that is impure or useless. Bask in the power of the candle and the openness you feel. Extinguish the candle. A deepening of this ritual might include performing it in the bath tub, shower, or outdoors and pouring the water over your head.

Personal Cleansing Rite #2

Items:

Sea salt

A bathtub (or shower)

Your favorite essential oils (optional)

Ground and Center. While drawing a bath hold a handful of sea salt in your power hand for the span of three deep breaths. (If you are showering then you will place the sea salt (and oils) into a small pouch made from a thin natural cloth which you will use as a washcloth.) Pour the salt into the bath water with the intent to create a healing/cleansing environment and say:

By Salt of Sea,
I call to me,
And set in motion,
This tiny ocean,
Whose briny deep,
Shall cleanse and keep
All evil deflected,
My soul protected.

Add your essential oils if you are using them and get into the bath. As you bathe, allow yourself to relax. Imagine that the stress, pain, anxiety or curse is being "drawn" from you like poison and being neutralized by the salt. When you feel ready, drain the tub imagining the neutralized energy flowing back to the ocean to be recycled. (You may wish to follow this up with the Personal Cleansing Rite #1 for added effectiveness.

Cleansing A Space (simple version)

Items:

A sage bundle (or other purification herbs)

A white candle

Ground and Center. Begin to feel inner power. Light candle with the intention to purify the area. Allow the candle flame to resonate with your inner power. Breathe into it then light the bundle of sage until it smolders. 'Smudge' the area by walking the perimeter of the area, making sure that one window (or door) remains open as an exit point for negativity. Make sure that the smoke gets into the corners of the room and take extra time on windows and doors. If a strong negative presence resides in a particular area take some time to really fumigate that area with the smoke. When you have completed walking the perimeter you may extinguish the sage or allow it to burn out. After you feel the rite is complete, extinguish the candle.

Cleansing A Space (heavy-duty version)

Items:

A broom

A sage bundle (or other purification herbs)

A black candle

Some sea salt

Spring water

A pleasant smelling essential oil (lemon works great)

A bell (or optionally a music recording of your choice)

Begin by performing the Personal Cleansing Rite #2 and then the Personal Cleansing Rite #1. Ground and Center. Begin to feel inner power. Light the candle with the intent that all evil is being banished. Ring the bell 9 times (or you may put on your favorite song that makes you feel powerful.) Take the broom and walk counter-clockwise around the area "stirring" the air with it. Focus your intent on sweeping up negativity, getting it ready to be discarded. Burn the sage and smudge as given in the Simple version. Smudge the salt combining it with the water holding it for a time in front of the candle, meditating on the flame and imagining it to permeate the mixture. Add a few drops of the oil and say:

By earth and air,

By fire, by water, by spirit,

I charge you with purity.

Anoint yourself with the mixture on the forehead then ring the bell 3 times. Now anoint the doors and windows while you sprinkle it over the entire area. Ring bell once. Extinguish the candle. Now do something to bring in good vibrations, such as dance, or have a party.

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About this capture

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Personal Cleansing Rite #2

Items:

Sea salt

A bathtub (or shower)

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About this capture

There are times when we feel the necessity to withdraw from the world and focus our energies inward, strengthening our Will, fortifying our resolve. When we feel challenged or threatened we can allow our magick to work in our favor, providing us with the necessary support and security. What follows are a couple different rituals that you can use at your discretion. For best results I would recommend performing a Cleansing Rite prior to these workings.

Protection Rite #1

Items:

An earthy, "grounding" incense (sandalwood, copal, myrrh, etc.)

A small pocket sized stone (black tourmaline or another similarly dark stone will suffice)

Some salt

A black candle

Ground and center. Light incense and fumigate the working area. Cast a circle by sprinkling salt in a ring around your working area. Imagine a protective wall springing up from the salt and forming around you. Hold the stone in your power hand and focus your awareness on it. Feel the hardness of the stone and notice how its energy flows differently from your own. It is slower, denser. Focus on these qualities of the stone and chant the following 3 times:

The Horned or Inverted pentacle is used to represent the Horned God, manifestation, and the powers of fierce protection.

I summon forth the strength of stone,
and conjure up these walls of rock,
Protect my soul, my flesh and bone,
My will the key, this stone the lock.

Allow the feeling to flow from the stone and into your body. Feel the strength and steadfastness of the stone and imagine that this same power is present in the walls around you. When you have sufficiently generated the necessary energy then focus your attention on the candle. Black is the color of banishing, and also of grounding, of ultimate manifestation. Feel the power of the protective stone flowing from you and into the candle as you light it and say:

Tower of light,

Fountain of force,
Circle of purity,
Ward of infinity.

Imagine that you can feel an affinity with the candle flame and that its light is also being generated from within you, shining outward in all directions. Allow this light to reach up to the heavens like a tower, flowing up and then cascading around you like a fountain, falling down to and charging the ring of salt as the power flows beneath the ground, encasing you in a protective ward of your own making. You may wish to repeat this process several times, chanting the above in repetition until a sense of power is achieved. Walk away and allow the candle to burn completely out.

By performing this or similar rites in times of stress will provide a feeling of security and heighten your power. In addition, the stone will become charged with a protective quality that you may draw from if feeling insecure or threatened.
More Protection Spells:

Protection Spell

Witches' Bottle

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Witches' Bottle

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Items Used:

black candle

sea salt

sage or other purifying herb, such as rosemary

a small sturdy stone

nine needles from a cactus

a cauldron (or other container that can hold candle wax and herbs)

Ground and center. Hold the candle in both hands while focusing on your fear. Take at least three deep breaths and allow the feeling of your fear to flow into the candle. If there is nothing specific to protect from then simply focus on a feeling of being protected. When you have achieved this feeling and you have allowed it to flow completely into the candle, place the candle in the cauldron.

Now take some salt and make a ring around the candle three times clockwise while chanting the following:

“Three times around,
three times about,
evil is bound,
evil stays out.”

Burn some of the sage or rosemary as an incense. Allow the smoke to waft over you. Grasp your stone. You will be holding it throughout the rest of this spell. Feel how solid it is, how sturdy. Allow that feeling to permeate you. Feel strong. Revel in this sensation.

When you are feeling particularly strong, light the candle and say:

“Pillar of light,
dispersing the shadow,
consuming adversity,
protecting my destiny.”

Feel how the black candle (that which threatens you) is being consumed by the light of the flame (your power). Place the nine cactus needles in the cauldron, along with a pinch of your purifying herb. Place the stone in the cauldron and allow the candle to burn down completely. When this is done the stone can then be removed and carried as a protective amulet. If any of the cactus needles have survived intact then you should bury them somewhere around your home (even if it is in a potted plant indoors!). This will provide a protective aura to be erected around your living space.

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About this capture

A witches' bottle is an ancient protection spell of great power. This is my version. I would recommend that anyone who is pursuing a magickal path make one to protect against any thought-forms, entities, spirits, demons, or simply negative energies that are bound to be encountered along the way. After charging, the bottle becomes an energetic trap for any force that intends to cause you harm. It is aligned to your energy-field through the use of your own DNA as well as symbolic powers that imprison and then transform harmful energy into something useful.

Items Used:

a small to medium sized jar or bottle (a large spice bottle works well)
sage, or other purifying herb such as rosemary
a black candle
sea salt
parchment paper (or other "nice" stationary)
dragon's blood ink
rusty nails, broken glass, needles, other sharp objects
dead bugs, some of your favorite food nicely molding, other "gross" things
some of your hair, finger or toenail clippings
some of your semen or menstrual blood
some of your urine
a handful of earth, or potting soil

a black cotton cloth

Perform this spell alone at night. On a night before the dark moon (women will need to adjust the timing to coincide with their menstrual cycle) gather your items together to perform this spell. Ground and center. Mark a circle on the ground around you with the sea salt, moving clockwise beginning and ending in the North. Burn your herb as an incense and allow the smoke to waft over you and your area. Hold the bottle over the smoke and make sure that some gets inside it. Light the black candle saying:

“From the darkness I conjure light
from the light I summon force,
from the force I invoke the power
to trap that which intends me harm.”

On the parchment write the following with Dragon’s Blood Ink:

Your full name (your magickal name will do if you identify with it.)
Your birthdate. (Month, day, year, and time if possible)
The symbol for your astrological sun, moon, and rising signs.
Any other symbol that you feel represents the real “you”.

Now smear some of your semen or menstrual blood onto the paper. Draw a circle around the whole thing and draw a pentagram over it, feeling that to do so is an act of power; that when the star is completed you have erected a field of protection around you. Roll up the parchment and place inside the bottle.

Now begin to fill the bottle with the other items: your hair and clippings, nails, glass, bugs, etc. You will want to fill the bottle about halfway. Say:

“Insects from beneath a rock,
needles, nails rusting fast,
Keep all harm inside and locked,
within this dungeon made of glass.”

Now fill the jar as far as possible with your urine, which is from your body in the act of release. This will provide a link for the energy to follow into the jar and remain. Add the handful of earth, feeling it’s connection to the planet and it’s ability to transform waste into fertility. Add three pinches of sea salt to the mixture. Cork the bottle or attach the lid and seal the edges with drippings from the black candle. Hold the bottle in both hands before you and in front of the candlelight so that the light shines through the bottle. Feel the power of the candle permeate your bottle, charging it with power and purpose. Say:

“I charge you, bottle, to trap all harm.
Keep me safe away from danger.
Inside darkness calls to darkness,
to be carried below

into the grave.”

Take three deep breaths and exhale all your stress, worry, doubt fear, pain, etc. into the bottle. On the last breath “hear” the power in your breath ring and resonate with the bottle. Wrap the bottle carefully in the black cloth and open your circle in the normal way. Go outside to bury the bottle in a place where it will not be disturbed. Should the bottle ever be disturbed or broken, rest assured that the negativity will not then return to you as it has already been neutralized by the salt and the handful of earth, but the bottle will cease functioning. If you end up burying it in a place that you cannot check up on its well-being, you then may want to perform this spell at different intervals, perhaps once a year on a certain date. This of course is up to you.

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"Her Laugh is Delight Made Music" ©2002 Storm Faerywolf

The Faery tradition is not what one might expect upon first hearing its name. It is the experience of chaos that leads to inspiration; of sexual abandon that leads to bliss; of deep and primal powers that are seldom understood or condoned by "polite" members of society. The Faery sits atop her mushroom, guarding the secrets that lie within its psychedelic flesh, and yet inviting us to partake in a little bit of the madness that is characteristic of her realm. While crazed we wax poetic, our sacred utterances the

invocation of our ancient Gods, so that we might offer our bodies as vessels and be changed forever by their presence. On the road to Faery there are both joys and horrors, but both are essential to the real growth that inevitably is the result of consistently working with the tools of the tradition. May these offerings provide the seeker with a few more.

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Articles & Essays:

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The Iron Pentacle

Currents in the Ocean

BlueGod's Online Shrine

The Summer King

The Royal Darkness

Laughing Maiden

the Guardians

Sugma'ad

Poem/Art: The Kiss of Dian y Glas

The Black Heart of Innocence

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About this capture

"Her Laugh is Delight Made Music" ©2002 Storm Faerywolf

The Faery tradition is not what one might expect upon first hearing its name. It is the experience of chaos that leads to inspiration; of sexual abandon that leads to bliss; of deep and primal powers that are seldom understood or condoned by "polite" members of society. The Faery sits atop her mushroom, guarding the secrets that lie within its psychedelic flesh, and yet inviting us to partake in a little bit of the madness that is characteristic of her realm. While crazed we wax poetic, our sacred utterances the invocation of our ancient Gods, so that we might offer our bodies as vessels and be changed forever by their presence. On the road to Faery there are both joys and horrors, but both are essential to the real growth that inevitably is the result of consistently working with the tools of the tradition. May these offerings provide the seeker with a few more.

Classes:

Feri Tradition Training Poetry & Art:

Articles & Essays:

What is the F(a)eri(e) Tradition?

The Iron Pentacle

Currents in the Ocean

BlueGod's Online Shrine

The Summer King

The Royal Darkness

Laughing Maiden

the Guardians

Sugma'ad

Poem/Art: The Kiss of Dian y Glas

The Black Heart of Innocence

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<http://www.faerywolf.com/feritraining.htm>

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About this capture

The Feri tradition is a mystical path of spiritual development unlike any other.

An initiatory mystery tradition of modern Witchcraft passed down by Victor & Cora Anderson and those who have been initiated in a lineage tracing back to them, it was first popularized by Starhawk in her book *The Spiral Dance*, as well as through the works of Gwydion Pendderwen. Hallmarks of the Feri tradition include shamanic practices, as well as specific symbolic, meditational and inner exercises. A highly personal path, it has old and strange roots that include influences or similarities such as Huna, Afro-centered spirituality, Celtic symbolism, sexual mysticism, esoteric Christianity, Middle-Eastern mysticism, ecstatic practice, and others.

I am currently offering Feri training in my private home in Antioch, CA. Offered in three stages, each successive level takes the practitioner through deeper layers of Feri practice. Each session lasts approx. 3-4 hours. Potential students should check my schedule for current availability and for information on how to register.

Level One

(2 Years/48 twice-monthly sessions)

\$60-120 per quarter, sliding scale

This foundational class deals with the establishment of a basic Feri spiritual practice.

Covered topics include:

History of the Tradition

Meditation

Working with Energy

Cleansing/Kala

Aligning the Three Souls

Basic Feri Ritual

The Iron and Pearl Pentacles

The Black Heart of Innocence

The Elements of Feri

Working Tools

The Guardians

The Divine Twins

The Infinitum (Gods of the Feri Lemniscate)

Level Two

(1 Year/24 twice monthly sessions)

\$60-120 per quarter, sliding scale

This intermediate class is a deepening of the tools and techniques that were learned in the previous class, as well as working with intermediate to advanced techniques of introspection, trance, working with various spirits, and invocation.

Covered topics include:

Advanced Energy Work

Working with the Infinitum

Altar Building

Visiting The Faery Rose Tree

Establishing Inner Contacts

Astral Projection

Advanced Feri Ritual

Those students who complete this course will be offered the rite of Empowerment.

Level Three

(Approx. 1-2 years, one-on-one biweekly sessions)

\$40-60 per month, sliding scale

This advanced class is only for those students who have mastered the previous work, and who have made the commitment to work toward Feri initiation. Completing this class is not a guarantee of Feri initiation but is required for consideration. Unlike the previous classes, this level provides individual training on a one-on-one basis in order to further tailor the process toward the individual student. This level will focus primarily on the Feri technique of possession, along with a special focus on the confrontation of personal demons and fears including ritual work to champion and transform them into our spiritual allies.

Covered topics include:

Demon Work

The Shadow Lover

Possession

Working with Death

Advanced Invocation Techniques

Working with the Void

I have been a Witch for more than 20 years and have been practicing Feri for more than half that time. I have lead open Witchcraft circles and taught classes in the Bay Area for nearly 15 years. I was initiated into Bloodrose-derived Feri in early 2002 and have continued to study from other branches of the tradition in order to round out my practice.

For more information, please email me or send a SASE to

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32 captures
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About this capture
What is the F(a)eri(e) Tradition?
by Storm Faerywolf

I sit in a circle of my own design, making call to the powers that surround and guard us. I listen for their answer and from beyond the firelight it comes. Forces from the outer darkness make themselves known to me; Dian na Glas, the Blue God, comes with childlike vigor, dancing silken spirals, the music of the spheres alive in his footsteps. Mari, full-breasted and powerful, complete and bountiful, emerges from within my cells, and calls to me, asking that I walk with Her feet.

Through my breath, I commune. My fetch, pulsing, glowing, delicate and fierce, throbs with power, it's undulating rhythm lulling me into a place where I know power. The Blue God- no longer separate from myself- flows like silver water from the depths of my GodSelf to quench the thirst of my souls, bringing with His sweet nectar the drunkenness of the Divine, and I dance. I dance in circles and rejoin the spinning of the universe with each step. I am touched by the Gods, and my dance is theirs.

When I first heard of the F(a)eri(e) tradition of witchcraft, it was in the pages of Starhawk's book *The Spiral Dance*. I remember being almost entranced by the (brief) description of the Blue God, the laughing god of love, as she described him, wondering about his stories, his touch, and longing to look upon his face. For me there was a connection. Although I couldn't have known it then, I was touched by His power; this Deity who dances in the springtime of the soul. It was this touch that eventually led me to find a teacher and to study the wild road we call Feri.

When listening to the stories of others I find certain ideas that are commonly used to describe personal experiences of the tradition. Of the tradition itself, it is often referred to as a "Chaos" tradition, referring in part perhaps to our particular relationship to the Star Goddess, the raging cosmos pregnant with possibility. Being a "left hand path" we embrace the fullest spectrum of possibility; we bask in the sunlight of the body, and revel in the darkness of the soul. The natural state of the soul unfettered by conditioning and restraint is sometimes referred to as "The Black Heart of Innocence", and is a phrase that poetically evokes the raw-ness of pure experience, forming the basis of what may be called the Feri perspective. Far from being a mental construct, this is a personal relationship to the universe, a relationship which does not seek to contain or even necessarily to define our experience with it. At it's core it is simple. We open, and the power flows through us, taking what form it will. It is a form of shamanism in the truest sense of the word.

In a tradition that is inherently shamanic, practitioners draw inspiration from many sources. Whether these are an established liturgy, the appearance of a certain plant or animal, a ritual given by a teacher, or a song learned while in trance, they do not in and of themselves define the practice as a whole. It is the experiential perspective relationship to them that is the unifying factor, and it is this relationship with which we are most concerned.

We are guided by those beings who are attached to this tradition: the Guardians, the Feri Gods, and join with them in spirit, allowing them to move through us, changing us forever. Our view that the Gods are real (as opposed to being simply psychological constructs or metaphor, as seen in many branches of the modern Craft) reflects our relationship with them, revealing it to be both personal and dynamic. When we call on our Gods, and they move through us, we have been changed even to our deepest levels. We know, in our bodies, the joy of Nimue at the Summer Solstice, or the dark power of the Arddu in the dead of winter's night.

Unlike most other branches of modern witchcraft Feri is not a safe tradition. As seekers into the outer dark, bringing only our wits with us into these uncharted territories of the spirit, we find ourselves most often vulnerable and alone. Searching for avenues to power and healing for both ourselves and for the land, we scratch and claw our way through ourselves, being confronted by our demons, our fears, and our true desires. Through preparation, both psychological and spiritual, we are taught how to touch the source of the Faerie power, and how to handle it once we have.

Another distinguishing factor of our path is initiation through the passing and use of the Faerie current of power. When we are initiated we are connected to the living current of energy that is unique to the tradition. We become conscious channels, allowing it to flow through us and into the world around us. This is the true function of any priest/ess: to be a mediator of universal power.

But what is the Feri tradition? How do we know when we are practicing Feri or we have moved into another realm? If Feri asserts personal experience over established liturgy, then how can we be certain that we, as a whole, are even practicing the same thing?

It has been suggested, in some circles, that material which varies from the original (or current) teachings of Victor Anderson is not part of the actual tradition. Being the GrandMaster of Feri, the initiatory lineage of each practitioner traces ultimately back to him. He is, in one sense, the origin of our tradition, being responsible for bringing it into the world at large, through his teaching and training of others who have carried the power outward to share with even more. Does this mean that material and insights created and used by other initiates of Feri should be viewed as being separate from the tradition itself? If we are practicing a tradition that is at its core an energetic relationship with the Feri power/Deities, then we cannot expect the outer forms to remain unchanged if we want the tradition to evolve and flourish. By asserting that we must always use the same outer form constitutes a type of dogmatic thinking that is dangerous in a shamanic tradition. To do so requires that we invalidate the unique experiences that we have when mediating the Gods; powers that are very real and alive.

The Feri power when mediated into the world through each of us, takes on other forms as deemed by the power, the Deities, and of course the individual practitioner themselves. To expect it to always conform to earlier forms/teachings is to deny its very real life-force; its ability to evolve as we each come to understand its beauty and simple

complexity. Without the outer forms of ritual, invocation, and symbolism, we are left with only one thing that defines us as Feri: our relationship with the energetic current. It is this point that marks the validity of our tradition; we are Feri because we are of Feri; we have been remade into willing vessels of its' power. It must, by it's deeply personal nature, touch each of us differently. It is these differences which, I believe, validate the path, not detract from it. By sharing our experience and perspectives with each other we become stronger for it. May we have the courage to always do so.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #1.

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About this capture
The Iron Pentacle:
Understanding the Harmonics of Consciousness
by Storm Faerywolf
From sex to pride,
from pride to self,
from self to power,
from power to passion
from passion to sex,
the gate is formed.
By my will the gate is opened.
Blessed be.

onsidered to be a foundational exercise of the Feri, the Iron Pentacle has proven to be a powerful symbol of the inner-work that is stressed so strongly in our tradition. Usually taught to students at or near the beginning of their training in order to provide a symbolic container for the work to come, the pentacle quickly becomes a personal mandala for the student, an energetic map that can lend important clues as to where we are wasting our energy, and provide us opportunities to heal imbalances in our inner

selves. It is a talisman of great power.

Briefly, the points can be understood as follows:

The point of Sex conceptually represents the creative power of the Universe. It is both polarity and resonance within the current of Divine energy. It is that point of orgasm in which we open to the Universal dance and participate in its creation and in its destruction within each moment.

The point of Pride is our recognition of our own self-worth and the ability to live fully without reservation, allowing our true nature to shine outward while not giving in to the ego's temptation to compare ourselves to others. It is complete innocence, living fully and unabashedly in the moment.

Self represents our full knowledge of our own potential as well as our limitations along with the knowledge of who we are in relation to others and the Universe at large.

Power is the balanced outpouring of our whole being; the focused harmony of all five points in the pentacle which allows us greater access to our own deep potential. It is the projection of ourselves into the world that causes change, that makes magick. It is never manipulative, for true power exists in its own right and finds revelry in cooperative relationships with other beings and points of view.

Passion is our ability to be open to the fullest experience of feeling, whether that be of the highest bliss, or of the deepest depression. It is the true embodiment of ecstasy.

Taken individually, the points on our pentacle represent important aspects of our consciousness that are normally interpreted in a negative light from the standpoint of mainstream society. Even in those times when an energetic relationship to the conceptual point on the pentacle is one that is encouraged by the mainstream, we find the relationship is usually an unhealthy one. One needs only look to the prevalence of sexual imagery in modern advertising, and the unrealistic expectations that it encourages, for an example of this. Our negative relationships are formed and reinforced each time we compare our bodies to those we see in a magazine, each time we feel "selfish" for accepting a compliment or taking pride in our work, and each time we automatically equate power with corruption.

By restructuring our relationships to these concepts we can begin to balance our world-view through the removal of the negative preconceptions already firmly in place within our psyches. This allows us deeper access to our authentic selves unhindered by cultural conditioning, a state poetically referred to in our tradition as "The Black Heart of Innocence". ©2003 Storm Faerywolf

It is from this space, this magnificent state of being, that magick is made. Only when we are free from our irrational fears can we begin to truly live, and it is precisely this that the Gods call for us to do. In order to mediate real power into the world (the true function of

any priest or priestess) we must first be made pure; we must come to terms with ourselves for exactly who and what we are, and in the face of this truth, begin to live it fully. Easier said than done.

Each point on the pentacle represents a particular wavelength of consciousness that, even when in isolation from the others, is an invaluable aid to the cleansing and development of the psyche. By connecting meditatively to each point, we can begin to discern how its conceptual power flows through us individually, giving us opportunities to notice how we are affected. When I experience the conceptual energy of Pride, for example, I am faced with the possibility of an unhindered boundless wave of self acceptance and love, an experience that, when taken in the greater context of everyday awareness leaves me with the experiential understanding of how well I am or am not actualizing such acceptance within my own life. If I am living from my heart center, then I am validated in that experience. If I am not, then I am reminded of that center, and encouraged, by example, to allow my energies to flow freely, thus cultivating that sense of pride that I am connecting to.

When used early on in training, it is common to meditate on each point in succession, gaining speed with each pass until the conscious mind can no longer attach itself to any one particular concept, blurring them into one flow of power. From Sex, to Pride, to Self, to Power, to Passion, and back to Sex, the points themselves become energetic markers, like bands of color in the spectrum, that stand out in the midst of the greater force, and yet are a necessary part of that force, lending to the experience rather than distracting from it.

When taken together, the points on the Iron Pentacle create a kind of harmony —not unlike the voices in a choir— that is greater than the sum of its parts. The five conceptual points of our pentacle interlock to create a kind of “psychic gateway” that leads us deeper into the realms of Faery, and into our own power. When we have actualized each point within ourselves, and are able to maintain a simultaneous connection to each of them and their relationships to each other within our consciousness, then we have embarked upon the remarkable journey: We have made the decision to abandon those negative traits forced upon us by the larger society in favor of a healthy relationship to ourselves, and have taken the first real step towards claiming our Divine birthright: We have decided to become more fully human.

But the question must be posed: Why in a shamanic tradition must we focus on tools and tricks that are obviously centered around affecting the psychological well-being of the student? Why not simply have the student enter into therapy and leave the psyche to the psychologists and the witchcraft to the witches?

It would be unwise to think that the realms of the psychological, the spiritual, and the magickal do not, at the very least, intersect. Much of the training work utilized in many of the branches that teach Feri today bear a striking resemblance to deep therapeutic techniques. Breathing exercises, controlled relaxation, and guided introspection are all techniques that are utilized in both therapy and in modern witchcraft, so what, if

anything, makes them different?

One difference is the deep spiritual connection of the community at large. In the presence of a teacher the Iron Pentacle becomes a connection point the student has to the greater Feri community, a symbol of how our diverse energies are interconnected and how they can flow together to form a unified working whole. Even if we each have a different understanding of the conceptual points, we have the work itself in common which leads us to a greater kinship with each other, as witches of the Feri clan. The fact that we each may have been taught differently on the subject merely reinforces the significance of the work to the individual; for the power to remain authentic it must, by definition, change from person to person to reflect the psychic make-up of the individual. When confronted with real power, real results occur. The Iron Pentacle, as a working tool, is a beginning point for understanding the Feri reality. For years practitioners of Feri have used these techniques, with much success, and have revised them to suit their individual needs as practicality demands. When I practice the Iron Pentacle I am filled with the knowledge that this is a path that other practitioners have embarked upon; other Feri have used these signposts in order to better understand their relationship to our Gods, the Universe, and themselves. When I practice, I am in good company.

Another major difference is in the very nature of the powers that we, as Feri, are dealing with. The Gods, Goddesses, Guardians, spirits, and powers that we are working with are real and not simply in a metaphorical sense as is seen in many modern traditions of the Craft. When I call upon the Gods they show up, providing me with perspectives that I was previously unaware of, or even leading me into situations where I have opportunity to claim and refine my power, my perceptual relationship to the universe.

In my opinion the exercises utilized in the Feri training are (for the right individual) much more powerful in effect than the standard therapeutic model. In addition to being a more direct way to deal with issues and complexes within the psyche, the magickal model enables the student to develop control of their relationship to their environment, and more importantly, provides an experiential understanding of how the world really works. Instead of just reinforcing the old paradigm of separateness, the magickal model does away with such nonsense and instills the understanding of interconnectedness as an experiential reality.

In light of all of this, the Iron Pentacle is, in one sense, a reminder of how that interconnectedness works on a personal level, thus bringing that understanding out into the world at large.

For many modern witches the symbol of the pentagram with its five interlocking points has come to represent the interconnected forces of the five natural elemental principals of the Universe working in harmony. It is a reminder that these forces exist in relation to each other, each serving a unique purpose and yet are interdependent with each other, each relying on the next for holistic balance to be achieved.

The shape of the pentacle with one point upwards is roughly in the shape of the human body with arms and legs outstretched. With this in mind we are reminded of the

holographic nature of reality, the microcosm/macrocosm: the idea that the very big is contained within the very small. In each of us exists an energetic map for the entire universe.

The Iron Pentacle takes full advantage of this symbolism providing a framework for grounding the conceptual energy into the human body. While focusing on the points in succession, the energy is generally felt within the body beginning with the point of Sex at the center of the forehead, Pride at the right foot, Self at the left hand, Power at the right hand, and finally Passion at the left foot. By running energy between these points we are able to bring the power of the Pentacle into our bodies in an attempt to free ourselves of blocks that we may possess that serve to hinder our growth.

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The pentacle is a way to begin to understand the universe in a personal way, as well as a means to understand ourselves, opening the gate to the Mystery and giving us access to the Star Goddess, the Primordial state of being. Like the iron in our blood, it is the foundation of our lives as well as our magick. As witches of the Feri Craft we are the holders of a sacred key which unlocks nothing less than our true potential, not only as witches but as fully realized human beings. With every breath we learn more about what that may be for each of us.

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About this capture

Currents in the Ocean:

Exploring the Fluid Nature of Divinity

by Storm Faerywolf

"All gods are one god, and all goddesses are one goddess, and there is one initiator."

-Dione Fortune

From the still and primal Darkness, floating in the realm of possibility emerges S/he who is the first emanation. From the Void S/he comes. A point of light that separates Being from the Cosmic Womb moves outward on the sheer joy of the manifest. Moving outward on the breath, blurring, taking form and taking shape, changing, merging, eternal. A myriad of color; a spectral force, moving through my body as I breathe and I know that I am not alone. Alive in my cells the Gods sing to me. I hear their tune and I answer with the pulsing of my heart. Moving inward on my breath, collapsing, changing, returning. A single point of light in the Universe, calling forth the Unity of all things.

When I first began to seriously study the Craft I was troubled by certain modalities of thought that sought to explain the Universe in terms of a structured hierarchy, usually one that supported whatever power structures were in place within the organizational body of that particular religious tradition. My intuitive sense, even at that tender and awkward age, was that reality was in a constant state of flux, always changing, always yearning to create new forms. I believed then as I do now: that all of Creation strives to express itself in new and interesting ways.

I remember my thoughts on gods and goddesses at the time, how inconceivable it was that these beings could somehow be separate from each other, if indeed we were all part of one being; one cosmic being experiencing itself through ourselves. My intuition called me to explore the idea of an ultimate Divinity, a Divine Source from which all else proceeded. I remember no book that I read on the Craft at that time speaking of such a concept, preferring to explain things in terms of interactions between the Goddess and the God, (explained as being separate powers) the mythological Lord and Lady reigning supreme from their celestial throne. When asked about a conceptual power behind these two beings, perhaps even a unifying force, I would be met with wide-eyed astonishment, or more usually, simply arrogant superiority. To focus on a singular Divine power or source was monotheism, I was told, and had no place in a polytheistic religion such as witchcraft.

Many a religious tradition has fallen prey to this trap of fixation, this idea that the Divine is somehow limited to certain qualities, aspects, faces, political affiliations, etc. By supposing that one has the only viable connection to Divinity (and that all others are therefore invalid) dangerously invokes a religious fanaticism that, by its nature of serving the ego and reinforcing whatever power structures are already in place, encourages the suppression of differing points of view, the destruction of indigenous peoples (who's traditional lifestyles are invariably in conflict with big business and the ideals of a religious structured hierarchy) and, by extension, the squandering of the earth's natural resources. It is a mindset that we are all far too familiar with.

One of the distinguishing marks of the Feri tradition for me has been in the recognition of the ambiguous nature of the Universe. Far from being a system that seeks to impose limits and definitions onto experiential realities, Feri seems to revel in the blurring of boundaries, taking sheer pleasure in the paradoxical, the anomalous, the Weird. The

unfathomable power of chaos is at its very core, that primal churning of energy that is the beginning point for everything known, and unknown. The Star Goddess moves outward from Herself, taking several forms, blurring one into the next, taking on new aspects, becoming more focused, yet retaining the essential quality of what has gone before.

All beings flow back into the ultimate source of all things. This implies that the underlying nature is a unified one, however this doesn't mean that any being will be just as useful for a particular purpose as any other. All goddesses are one Goddess, but this doesn't mean that I would find it useful to invoke Kali for a love spell, or Aphrodite for the destruction of an oppressive pattern. We find different points of focus along the spectrum that are aligned to different energies. We "tune into" varying frequencies in the waves of Divinity at different times, as we deem appropriate. I can understand mentally that the Blue God is, in one sense, a manifestation of the Star Goddess, but I also recognize that they feel quite different, and because of this possess different powers.

Recently I had a dream. In this vision I was shown a window into the nature of the Star Goddess, specifically Her relationship to other Deities of the Feri tradition, and by extension to the Universe at large.

In the dreamtime I see a light. The light from a black candle breaking across the darkness of the room, as my teacher and myself sit, breathing in a rhythm, calling down the trance upon ourselves. We breathe, and the white flame becomes surrounded by a rainbow band, a prismatic nimbus that hints at the hidden powers within the light. I inhale, and the power moves outward from that light, becoming now something different; moving into a new form. Where there was one power, there are now two: Nimue and Dian y Glas, birthed from the white fire womb of the Cosmic Mother. It continues, riding on the waves of my breath, these two powers move outward still, changing from these child-like beings and maturing into the Great Mother, and the Harvest Lord, then finally into the Crone, and the Winter King. A point of stillness at the end of my breath, and then it returns on my exhale, these powers collapsing back into that from which they came, flowing backward into that point of light which contains them all: the white fire of the Star Goddess, flickering softly in the darkness of the Void.

I awoke with a sense of purpose, determined to actualize what I had seen. I began to perform the exercise from my dream, slowly at first, following the pattern as laid out in my vision. It wasn't long, however, before the flow of power began to take on a life of its own, emerging into new configurations, new patterns that challenged the seemingly structured order that was present in the dream. I began to experience the interactions of specific Deities I had not associated with each other before. The Blue God flowing into the Winter King, forming a specific energetic vibration, a frequency that, in one sense, represented the revelation of a Deity previously unknown to me; a hybrid, a seeming paradox if I were to retain the rigid thinking that would force them to remain separate. I began to contemplate this being, allowing Him to show me his secrets, feeling His flow of power, listening to His whispers. Then I promptly forgot all about it.

That is until quite recently.

Working extensively with the Star Goddess as of late, I found myself bathed in Her fire. Resting in my heart in the form of an idol I created for Her, she pulsed with white flame as elemental fire raged into my body from the four directions. I awoke with a fever, drifting in and out of consciousness but always returning to the idol in my chest and the fire in my body. I felt as if my blocks to power were being, quite literally, burned away, leaving me pure and open. My fever grew and for a short time I was no longer able to make the distinction between this world and the next, being comforted by the singing of unseen children, and the constancy of my vision. Then the being came.

He emerged from the darkness to rest before my closed eyes. He was beautiful, appearing as if in his early twenties, triangular features, pale skin, jet black hair. His eyes were the blue of the star-lit sky infused with the still cool light of morning. He looked into me and aroused my desire for Him. He had a playful wickedness to Him, a sense of almost punkish sensuality that both allured and frightened. I wanted Him and found myself relaxing into Him. After a brief silence He told me that, now in my fever, I could come with Him if I chose to; I could leave my physical body and wander the Outer Darkness with Him as my shining guide. There was a definite sense of temptation, as if He, the Pied Piper of my dreamtime, were attempting to seduce me into choosing my own death and for a time I was indeed tempted. To look upon His face was to be filled with desire for Him. But to stand in His presence was also to be reminded of the importance of this reality, a sharpness that cut to the heart of the matter at hand. I looked into His eyes and gave Him my answer, that there was still more that I wanted to do here and thank you anyway.

He responded by opening his cloak (Why had I not noticed it before?) made entirely from feathers. He had no body, but this was of no concern to me, as the focus of the vision was on the feathers: iridescent black but interspersed with those of a peacock, revealing a secret into the being's identity. He danced. In circles He danced, whirling like a dervish silently off into the Outer Dark. Then he was gone.

By the next day my fever had broken and I was left to ponder my encounter with the nameless being. It was obvious to me that I had encountered, in vision, a Deity who had only previously been hinted at by the dream exercise; a blend of energies that produced a focal point where two different currents of power could flow into each other.

This being, this amalgamation is, quite literally, the offspring, the Divine Child of Dian y Glas and the Winter King, merged together in Holy Bliss. The implications of this realization, especially for me as a gay man, were tremendous. No longer would I be able to impose onto the realm of spirit the limitations of the physical. Sex, gender, reproduction; we have definite ideas as to what these terms mean for the human animal. But moving into the areas of the spiritual these ideas reflect different, more core truths. No longer limited by the density of the manifest we are left to contemplate their energetic essence and begin to understand these forces as mutable, flowing into each other, dancing together, making new forms, expressing to their fullest the possibilities of

the erotic. To do so is to begin to touch the ecstatic.

In my body I understand the fluid nature of the Gods and so I need no one else to validate, or categorize my experiences for me. In communion with the Divine I require no outside authority. I stand as a Sacred Gateway for spirit to flow into the world, however strange it may seem at times. With this experience comes the realization that we are all such a gateway, just waiting to be open and allow the Divine, and our true selves, to flow into the world. In this psychedelic realm we know that what we dream is real, and that in this sea of energy we call the Universe, we are all just swirls, temporary patterns that arise for a time and then are gone, returning to that from which we came. A current flows here under the waves, seemingly going against the tide, challenging what is known, revealing new possibilities. In this ocean of experience we swim, feeling our way through to the depths of our own being, and beyond. In this state we can hold on to nothing, our judgments and egos would just weight us down, and so we choose the only other path: to be open, and to allow ourselves to be led by the current of the Divine into bliss. To do this is to do nothing less than to choose our own liberation.

An expanded version of this article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #3.

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<http://faerywolf.com/bluegod.htm>
44 captures
12 Mar 2001 - 21 Jan 2022
Apr FEB Aug
14
2003 2005 2006

About this capture

"BlueGod of the Elves" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf

BlueGod of the silken touches,

dancing circles
dreaming bliss,
alluring, tempting,
love-struck falling,
blessed is he
who tastes your kiss.

"In the Presence of the BlueGod" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf

From the womb of Mother Night,
The first star born to bring forth light
Fell to earth on angel's wings,
Watching, waiting, laughing, singing,
Strutting in His peacock dance,
Calling down the wild-eyed trance,
Shaking heaven, tearing hell,
A rising serpent from the well.

"BlueGod and the Source of Ecstasy" ©2000 Storm Faerywolf.

"BlueGod Butterfly" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf

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http://www.faerywolf.com/art_stargoddess.htm
14 captures
16 Feb 2005 - 10 Oct 2013
Feb MAR Jun
24
2004 2005 2006

About this capture
"Sugma'ad, The Star Goddess" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf
"Sugma'ad, The Star Goddess"
©2001

Here is one version of the Feri Star Goddess, based on that taught by the Bloodrose line of Faery.

Traditionally she is a jet-black skinned woman with the head of a lioness, seated upon her throne of black onyx. In my version her throne is that of the entire cosmos, a reminder of her all-encompassing existence, further symbolized by the spiral galaxy emanating from her left hand. The silver egg of creation rests in Her lap, representative of the cosmic womb. Her customary halo of black fire has here been replaced with a black oroborus, which is also Her traditional emblem.

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http://www.faerywolf.com/art_SummerKing.htm
21 captures
19 Jun 2003 - 10 Oct 2013
Feb MAR Jul
24
2004 2005 2008

About this capture
"The Summer King" ©2002 Storm Faerywolf

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"The Summer King"
©2002

Here we see a depiction of the Horned God as seen by some sects of the Feri tradition. Sometimes called the Summer King, or the Harvest Lord, he represents the radiance of the sun, and the life giving powers of virility. His skin is golden, and his neck is adorned with a swathe of summer flowers. He has the head of a stag—a reminder that He is primal in nature. Like most Horned Gods he is overtly sexual, but is also a nurturer... he is the God in His aspect as 'Father' and 'Lover', and as such may be prayed to for guidance, and even as a surrogate for those aforementioned roles if need be.

I wanted this image to reflect the eroticism that this God represents, while still depicting His softer nature. His phallus is semi-erect, hinting at sexual arousal but not exclusively so. He leans back with his legs spread to offer us His sex—a stance that is neither domineering, nor submissive.

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<http://www.faerywolf.com/bluegod2.htm>
9 captures
21 Feb 2005 - 31 Dec 2011
Feb MAR Jul
24
2004 2005 2008

About this capture

From the stars the boy was born,
shining blue with longing eyes,
Soft as many petaled rose,
He lifts my soul into the skies.

"BlueGod and the Source of Ecstasy Pt. 2" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf.
Beyond the ego's iron gate,
beyond the stars and moon,
into Dian y Glas' kiss,

that's where you'll find me soon.

©2000 Storm Faerywolf My head is spinning, my lips do part,
I fall into a drunken haze,
For into Faery I have stumbled,
and here now I shall spend my days.

My body sings with silken pleasure,
My mind filled only with delight,
My triple soul enraptured with
the power of His softened might.
Now for the bed, the serpent rises,
stretches upwards for his kiss,
a flashing tongue of silver satin
a holy river made of bliss. ©2000 Storm Faerywolf

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All photos on this page were found on the web and augmented by me.

http://www.faerywolf.com/art_RoyalDarkness.htm

18 captures

15 Feb 2005 - 10 Oct 2013

Feb MAR Jun

24

2004 2005 2006

About this capture

"The Royal Darkness" ©2004 Storm Faerywolf

"The Royal Darkness"

©2004

This is my version of the Arddu, the Feri God of death.

Traditionally he has the head of a goat, and the breasts of an old woman, but He has never appeared to me in that guise. Here He is depicted with the head of a bull, a symbol that I feel better reflects His mighty power and primal nature.

He is the Guardian of the Crossroads, and the great teacher. All who would pass through the dread gate must first confront Him. He can represent our own fears, and the ecstasy that we can experience when we face them.

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http://www.faerywolf.com/art_blackheart.htm
2 captures
21 Feb 2005 - 24 Mar 2005
Feb MAR Apr
24
2004 2005 2006

About this capture
"The Black Heart of Innocence" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf
"The Black Heart of Innocence"
©2001

"How beautiful is the black lascivious purity
in the hearts of children and wild animals..."

Titled after one of the basic tenets of the Feri tradition, this image attempts to capture
the uproarious openness that this concept embodies.

It is said that the Black Heart can emerge when all five points of the Iron Pentacle are in
balance. Often misunderstood as being exclusively sexual, the Black Heart is that and
so much more. When we are living from our Black Hearts we are living wild and free;
unrestrained by those negative societal conditions that are placed upon us since birth.

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http://www.faerywolf.com/art_LaughingMaiden.htm

18 captures

15 Feb 2005 - 10 Oct 2013

Feb MAR Jun

24

2004 2005 2006

About this capture

"Laughing Maiden"

©2004

This is one look at the maiden Goddess aspect recognized by the Feri tradition. She is the wild spirit of youth and potency; the arouser of life; the embodiment of the Black Heart of Innocence. A crescent moon rests on her brow as primal snakes writhe in her hair. Childlike exuberance exudes from her toothy grin, but watch out! For all of her cute-ness there is also something disturbing about her... a danger and even a sexuality that is not comfortable when witnessed in a creature so young. She is the first aspect of the Star Goddess, and as such embodies all of creation. The universe in the hands of a child... I hope this homage makes her happy with me.

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"Laughing Maiden" ©2004 Storm Faerywolf

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http://www.faerywolf.com/art_stargoddess2.htm

15 captures

16 Feb 2005 - 10 Oct 2013

Feb MAR Sep

24

2004 2005 2006

About this capture

"The Faery Star Goddess" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf. Click [HERE](#) for an alternate version.

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"The Faery Star Goddess"
©2001

When Faery GrandMaster Victor Anderson was five years old, he reportedly had a vision of Holy Mother Isis, clothed in the symbols of the American flag. Here we see my recreation of this traditional Feri teaching.

According to Cora Anderson in *Witch Eye #6*, this Goddess has a "gold-tinted complexion, emerald green eyes and long blue-black hair. She wears a robe of black, bespangled with stars in all of the natural colors. There is a ribbon of light falling between her breasts to her bare feet. At the top of this ribbon is an inverted blue triangle with a five-pointed, white star in the middle. The ribbon has the same number of red and white stripes as the American flag."

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http://faerywolf.com/art_guardian05.htm
5 captures
22 Feb 2005 - 19 May 2011
Jan FEB Sep
22
2004 2005 2008

About this capture

"HS" ©2003 Storm Faerywolf

Shining brilliance, piercing dark
Radiance of conscious power
Within my mind, Your spark exists
We speak without words
Our minds ever knowing,
and awareness ever flowing.

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http://www.faerywolf.com/art_tattvas.htm
7 captures
21 Feb 2005 - 10 Oct 2013
Feb MAR Jul
24
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About this capture
Faery Tattvas

"Stone" ©2003 Storm Faerywolf
"Pool" ©2003 Storm Faerywolf "Awareness" ©2003 Storm Faerywolf "Sunrise"
©2003 Storm Faerywolf

"Flame" ©2003 Storm Faerywolf

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http://faerywolf.com/art_tattva4.htm

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22

2004 2005 2008

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<http://faerywolf.com/meditations.htm>

44 captures

4 Mar 2001 - 10 Oct 2013

Apr MAY Jun

17

2004 2006 2007

About this capture

"Dreaming of the Sacred Dove" ©2004 Storm Faerywolf

The Five Elements:

#5 Spirit

#2 Fire

"The Symbol of Earthly Power" ©2004 Storm faerywolf

#3 Water

#4 Earth

#1 Air

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http://www.faerywolf.com/art_sacreddove.htm

18 captures

3 Feb 2004 - 10 Oct 2013

Apr SEP Apr

23

2004 2005 2007

About this capture

"Dreaming of
the Sacred Dove"

©2004

The 'Sacred Dove' is a Feri term for the God-self; the highest of our three souls. When aligned with the other two we can begin to see the emergence of the Black Heart of Innocence, that fierce openness that burns from our very core.

Here we see a seated figure in meditation, his chakras aligned and activated. The earth around his head tells us that he is the talker, the conscious mind. His back is turned to the dove, for he cannot perceive the dove directly. This celestial body in his mind draws us by association to the next cosmic image: the waxing moon, which shows a dawning awareness of the unconscious. The shadow figure is the fetch and it is he who can look directly at the dove and in so doing participate in the manifestation of divine presence as symbolized by the Druidic Awen upon his brow.

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"Dreaming of the Sacred Dove" ©2004 Storm Faerywolf

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http://faerywolf.com/med_spirit.htm

29 captures

5 Mar 2001 - 11 Feb 2021

Sep SEP Apr

05

2005 2006 2008

About this capture

Turn now to face the center. This is the place of culmination, of completion; a time beyond all times. Breathe deep and allow your consciousness to float freely in darkness. From the darkness emerges a yellow pentagram of light that settles in the East. You feel the air around you begin to swirl and change. A red pentagram settles in the South. A strange heat swells up around you. In the West, a blue pentagram takes hold. All around you feels smooth, like water. And finally, a green pentagram finds home in the North. Everything comes to a halt, and all around feels still, silent, and stable. Breathe deep. You feel strands of energy stream from the pentagrams into your body. Feel the raw power. Feel the combined energy of the four elements enter and begin to change your Self. Call more of this energy into your body. Feel your power to Know, to make intelligent choices. Imagine the yellow pentagram glowing brighter. Feel your power to Will, to direct your true inner desire. Imagine the red pentagram glowing brighter. Feel your power to Dare, to feel the deepest emotions. Imagine the blue pentagram glowing brighter. Feel your power to keep Silent, to sit in stillness and listen when necessary. Imagine the green pentagram glowing brighter. When all four pentagrams are glowing brightly in your mind, say:

"Four elements in this place be, combined to call the fifth to me!"

Feel the energy flood your body; feel it flood your mind, your essence. All around you grows bright. The light begins to blind you until...

Breathe deep. You are floating in a bright place. Your feet dangle in nothingness. All around you is white; is light.

Breathe deep. You know that you can impose form on this place—you can bring it into being. As you breathe, shape begins to form. You stand now at a crossroads—the

pentagrams hovering at the end of each road. Above you, and below, looms the nine pointed star of the Goddess! Three points for each: Maiden, Mother, Crone. Nine is the number of real change! In between all of these, you stand in the center.

Yours is the power to Go; to choose any road, or none at all. Yours is the power of Change. Feel the changes occurring within you. Feel the changes in your mind—a million thoughts chasing around per second! Feel the changes in your Will—your desires opening, renewing. Feel the changes in your emotions—swirling, flowing. Feel the changes in your body—cells dividing, tissues growing! Say:

"Hail Mother of All! Open the Gate that I may Change!"

Breathe deep. Remember changes that you have made in your life. They could be major changes or small. Remember how it felt to initiate change. You are a changer! Stretch out your arms and legs and call that feeling into your body with your voice:

(Allow yourself to sing or chant, raising energy.)

Notice where you feel it in your body. Imagine that feeling as a brilliant violet or white-rainbow light. With your breath, push that feeling—that light—into a ball in the center of your forehead. Feel the power of Change. Say:

"By the powers of Spirit!"

Imagine this power traveling downward to your right, leaving a trail of white vibrating fire, until it reaches your right foot, where it begins to glow a brilliant yellow. Feel your power to Know. Feel your mind and all its processes. Say:

"By the powers of Air!"

With your breath, imagine the power traveling to your left hand, where it glows a fiery red. Feel your power of Will. Say:

"By the powers of Fire!"

Send this energy over to your right hand and see it glow sapphire blue. Feel the power to Dare. Say:

"By the powers of Water!"

Send the power down to your left foot, and allow it to glow emerald green. Feel the power to keep Silent. Say:

"By the powers of Earth!"

Push the energy back up to your forehead, and see the energy again as a violet or

white-rainbow light.

(For reference see the diagram below and imagine it directly in front of your body.)

"The Symbol of Earthly Power" ©2004 Storm Faerywolf

Moving the energy through your body with the pentagram helps to remove any blocks you may have.

Repeat the process several times, gaining speed each time. Remember to keep your breath rhythmic; slow and deep.

Absorb the pentagram into your body into a space just below your navel. Feel the powers of the elements within you. Notice how they are always at play in your life.

Return to normal awareness. It is done.

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27 captures
29 Apr 2001 - 11 Feb 2021
Sep SEP Apr
06
2005 2006 2008

About this capture
FIRE MEDITATION

As we move southward, the temperature begins to rise. Face south and breathe deep. Let your body relax. Allow yourself to drift into the darkness. Become aware of a light before you. As you focus attention on it, you begin to float towards it. As you get closer, waves of heat flow over you. Now you can see, and you realize that you are standing in a great desert. The air is dry, and the wind is hot. The noonday sun looms overhead. There is a warmth from the sand over your bare feet. Look around you, to see what this place has to offer. Take your time.

On a nearby rock rests a great lion, who watches you closely. You can sense awesome power from the beast. As you connect with the animal, it lets out a terrible roar, and you feel your awareness jump! With each breath, you travel inward. Spiraling in and down into your Self.

You are no longer aware of the desert, or the lion. You are only aware of the darkness around you, broken only by a dim, pale light ahead. As you focus your attention on it, your eyes pull you deeper towards it. You are deep within yourself. You can feel the great power here. Feel the heat in your body, and the energy within each cell. See and feel the electric spark as each synapse fires and impulses travel from nerve to nerve—a thousand times in the blink of an eye! Feel the strength of your power! Know that to channel this power is to create real change—to perform magick! Feel this knowledge in your body. Feel it with your will.

As you watch this power in your Self, it occurs to you that it's like watching the most strange and beautiful lightning in the worlds, as it dances around your nervous system. As thoughts are forming in your brain, miraculous patterns of power and energy are created. But as some patterns are created, so others are also destroyed. Feel the power of your determination, your will.

Be aware of yourself as a conduit for energy. Energy flows in and through you. You

need only to be open. And now feel the responsibility that comes with this power. A flame can heal the sick. A flame can provide energy. But a flame can also burn. A flame can be dangerous. Think of a time in your life when you felt powerful, energetic. Perhaps a time when you caused a major change in your life, or the lives of those around you. Or maybe a time when you "got the job done" when it wasn't expected of you. (You may, of course, make it up. The important idea here is the feeling.) Feel this sensation. Imagine it as a combustion of energy that is firing within you.

Reach down to your belt and hold your athamé, your blade. Feel it in your hands. See how it is an extension of your hand when you hold it. Notice how energy seems to travel up and through it. This is the tool of the will, that spiritually focused intent that makes things happen. Feel your fire within, and will your awareness back to the desert.

In the desert, the sand is warm on your feet and the air is hot and dry. The sun still looms overhead, and the lion watches attentively. Feel your internal power. Will your power to arise. Feel it like a volcano, beginning to erupt. Sense the frantic energy that is going on in your nerves and brain. Allow it to rise, in your body and spirit. Raise your knife, and trace a large pentagram of red fire in the air before you. This is the gate to the elemental realm of fire! The flame of sun and star! The raging wildfire. The life-giving hearth fire. The campfire that cooks a meal. The power of determination, of energy. The passion of lovers. Wildness. Rage. These are the gifts of fire! Feel the heat from the pentagram and open yourself to it. Say:

"Hail Lord of the Sacred flame! Open the gate of my will."

A tongue of flame reaches forward and touches your left shoulder (or left hand). Your consciousness opens up, and absorbs the flame. Allow it to become one with the flame! Feel the red flame licking you, changing you. Feel your power grow! Feel the old dead parts of your self being burned away, to make room for new growth. Know that all you need for power is to light a candle, to tend a fire, to watch a star. You can feel your own fire, and feed it when necessary. Give yourself permission to build your internal fire as big, or as small, as you need. When you have fed enough, say good-bye to this place, and thank it for what it has shown you. Take a step backwards and address the pentagram:

"Powers of the South, powers of fire.
I thank you for my will.
I thank you for my strength.
I thank you for my passion.
Thank you for the power of my body
Thank you for the power of my mind
Thank you for my spirit.
Sacred flame, may there always be peace between us.
Blessed be."

Open your arms and wave the flaming star away. Watch it as it travels out of sight. Say:

"Hail Lord of the Sacred Flame! Thank you for opening wide the Gate! Blessed be!"

Look around you. Thank the lion for whatever gifts you may have received, and will yourself into a dark place. Let your breath guide you higher, higher, until you are floating upward. With each breath your awareness expands, and you are aware now of this room. Ground any excess energies. Return to normal awareness.

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We look skyward, towards the North Star which is always fixed, and focus on the powers of the Earth. Face North and breathe deep. As you breathe in a rhythm, allow yourself to float in darkness. Ahead of you, you can make out a soft glow. As you focus your attention on it, you begin to float gently towards it. With each breath, the glow separates into a thousand points of light against a dark velvet backdrop. As you stare up at the stars in the dark midnight sky, you notice one bright star in the center—the North Star! You can feel solid ground beneath your feet, and as you look around, you see that you are standing on the edge of a great mountainous forest. Look at each of the directions, and see what there is to see, and hear, and feel, and sense. When you have examined every detail of the landscape, turn again to face the North, and face the

forest!

Breathe deep and begin your journey into the forest. Notice the ground beneath your feet. Feel the rocks and stones, and hear dry twigs snapping with each step. The forest gets thicker as you travel deeper within. Soon you are surrounded by the trees and foliage, boulders and rocks. You can barely see ahead of you through the darkness—the only light comes from the North Star. You hear something crashing through the bushes and you see a great stag standing before you. It is a majestic animal, and magickal to behold. You can sense its intelligence, and feel its awesome power. Connect with it. It seems to beckon to you, call to you. It turns and slowly leads you to a well worn path that leads up the mountain. You can feel the packed soil beneath your bare feet. The light of the star enables you to see the winding path ahead of you—winding up into the dark forest.

Breathe deep, and follow the stag. Allow yourself to take in every detail of the surrounding forest. What does it look like to you? How does it smell? Can you feel the trees? The plants? As you travel the path you notice that there are hard places and soft. Rough and smooth. Breathe deep and follow the path deeper into the dark forest. Reach out with your awareness and ‘feel’ the presence of the trees—hundreds upon hundreds of years old. Ancient wisdom. Standing strong. Feel the sap rising in the trunks, the rings being slowly created. Feel the awareness of the trees—the glorious splendor of unfurled leaves stretching outward toward the night sky. You feel dwarfed by them, surrounded.

Breathe deep and allow yourself to feel the awareness of the boulders. Notice how they are different from the trees. Feel how strong they are, how stable. Breathe deep, and follow the path.

As you travel upward, the stag leads you to a small clearing in the forest, the North Star directly overhead. Before you is a great standing stone, and ancient trees form a circle on the perimeter. You have a sense of power here—ancient power, power that precedes a name. Take a deep breath and walk into the circle.

As you walk closer, you can feel the energy of the standing stone as a tingling in your body. Notice where you feel it. The stone seems to be almost humming with power! You walk closer to it, and with a deep breath, you place your hands on it. Feel the power flow from the stone and into your body through your hands. Feel the energy travel down your body, down your legs, and into the ground through your feet. This power pulls you downward and fills you. Fills you with ancient wisdom. It heals your body.

As you are feeling this power, the stag steps forward and touches its great antlers against the stone. The light of the North Star seems to glow brighter as the stone hums louder. You can feel lines of energy from each of the surrounding trees leading to the standing stone. A green fog seems to emanate from the stone, merging with the starlight until it forms into a five pointed star—a flaming green pentagram—hovering just above the stone. This is the Gate to the elemental realm of Earth. Ancient wisdom. Birth, growth, death. Healing. Manifestation. The physical body. The power to create!

The power to keep silent and listen when necessary. These are the gifts of Earth! Breathe deep and stretch out your arms toward the pentagram. Open yourself up to it. Say:

"Hail Mother of the Earth! Open the Gate that I may Keep Silent!"

As you open yourself up to it, a shaft of misty emerald-green light shines forth from the center of the pentagram and touches your left foot. Feel the power enter your body! Allow it to completely fill you with its healing green light. Notice where in your body you can feel it. Feel your flesh. Feel the internal workings of your body. Feel your cells dividing, multiplying—and even dying. Feel how your body is efficient—taking in nourishment, providing energy, and eliminating waste. Feel the perfection that is your body!

Breathe deep and reach down to the pouch on your belt and remove your pentacle—an image of a five pointed star made from clay. Hold it in your hands. Feel how it is made from the Earth. As you hold it, feel how the energy in your body deepens. Notice that your awareness is deepening, your power growing! You can feel the awareness of the circle of trees—and beyond! You can feel the whole forest—the entire mountain! Feel your awareness sink down into the Earth. Down into the dark soil. Feel the moist earth all around your skin as you are enveloped in darkness. Dig downward with your fingers. Feel the dirt between your toes! Dig further down into the Earth. Feel this in your body: You are a part of the Earth! With every breath your power grows, your awareness grows, until you are aware of the whole Earth, and you are but a natural formation—a living rock, a moving mountain. Allow your consciousness to deepen and expand. Think of a time in your life when you created something from an idea. Perhaps a piece of art, or maybe a time when you grew a plant from a seed. Allow yourself to bring that feeling—that power—back into your body now. Remember how it felt to bring something into the physical world. You are a creator! But you are also a destroyer! To tend a garden, we must pull weeds. To make a sculpture we must carve away at stone. Feel the duality of the Earth. When you have examined the details of your awareness, say:

"Powers of the Earth,
powers of the forests and stones,
powers of my body,
I rejoice in you!
I am alive in every tree.
I am alive in every mountain.
And all the Earth is alive in me!"

You feel the Earth begin to tremble and shake around you as Mother Earth releases energy! You see the green energy surround you and you focus your attention on your pentacle—the tool of grounding, of protection. With every breath, it pulls you upwards towards the surface—towards the circle of trees. Breathe deep, and you find yourself standing on solid ground again, the green star looming overhead. Hold your pentacle out away from your body toward the green star and say:

"Hail Mother of the Earth! Thank you for opening wide the Gate! Blessed be!"

Feel your power rise up from the Earth, through your pentacle, and into the green star. Feel your pentacle pull the green star energy slowly into the Earth, until it is gone. Take a deep breath. Return to normal awareness.

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About this capture

A Grounding Meditation

"Rooted in the Earth" ©2002 Storm Faerywolf

Grounding is a most, if not the most, important first step to any ritual, magickal or otherwise. When we have been grounded, we have undergone several meditative steps and visualizations in order to focus our awareness, and to cleanse ourselves from any extraneous thoughts or emotions that might prove distracting, or even harmful, in a ritual setting.

When we connect with the Earth, we are connecting with the body of the living Goddess, so that Her energies are made available to us, travel through us, envelope us, and heal us. It is important that we not use our own personal energy, so as not to become depleted.

The meditation that follows is designed for a group, however changes can easily be made to accommodate for solo work.

Sit or stand in a comfortable position so that your back is straight. If standing, bend your knees slightly so as not to block the energy flow. Take in a few slow deep breaths through the nose, slowing even more on the exhale. Around you is a glowing white mist that surrounds and permeates your aura. Breathe in this energy, and as you breathe, send it to a spot just below your navel. With each breath, it grows stronger, warmer, larger. With each exhale, the mist that surrounds your body is stirred-up. Changing. Flowing. Constantly moving. From this space, your feet, and the base of your spine, send down a root, like the root of a tree, into the Earth, who is our Mother. Feel it traveling downward past the Earth's surface. Downward past forgotten caverns and ancient water tables. Downward, through the cool soil and slabs of bedrock. Further still, past the layers of magma. Traveling downward. Down. Down, until it reaches the center of the Earth that is the heart of the Mother.

Feel the warm red energy that is there. Feel the power. The power to invigorate. The power to change. The power to heal. Feel the passions of the Mother. Begin to feel your root plant itself into this force, and feel it intertwine with the roots of everyone here in this circle. Feel the connection we have with one another. Continue to breathe, and with each breath, we draw up this energy into our roots, absorbing it into our being. It travels upwards past the different layers of the Earth's crust, past the magma and bedrock. Past the water tables and caverns, and the surface of the Earth. Feel the soft spaces in the soles of your feet become opened to this energy, receptive. As we breathe, we accept the energy that is the Goddess, into our lives and bodies. Feel it tingling in your feet, and it rises higher, higher into our legs and knees. Higher into our thighs and pelvis. Feel it as it warms us, giving us the energy we need to heal, to make change, to do magick. It travels upward into our abdomen and stomach. Higher into our chests and throats, giving us the power to speak. Outward, into our arms, and into our hands, giving us the power to do. Traveling from right to left, around the circle, spiraling higher, stronger. Higher into our heads. Feel it scurry up the back of our necks, onto our scalps. Feel it rise over our faces. Rising. Higher still, until it converges on the tops of our heads, and sprouts forth, like the branches of a tree, reaching upward, outward, rising, growing. Feel leaves begin to grow, leaves of our trees. Feel the branches begin to intertwine and mingle, connecting us again with each other, and the Goddess. As the branches continue to grow, they begin to bend downward, until they, like the branches of the willow tree, touch the Earth. The power travels upwards, from the Earth, into our roots and bodies, into our branches, and returns to the Mother, continuing in a constant fluid motion, like a circle, making us a living circuit. It spirals upward, giving us power. It spirals outward, expanding our awareness. It spirals downward, cleansing our souls. Feel the energy as it dances about. Breathe it in. Be with this power for a moment.

Now, become aware of another energy, an energy that is of the stars. Feel it as a cool electric blue cloud that descends slowly upon us. Feel this cloud, that is the God, being absorbed into the leaves of our tree like a plant absorbs sunlight. Feel it as it travels down our branches and into our heads, cooling us, calming us, clearing our thoughts.

Like water, it washes away all that is impure, all that is negative, all that is not needed. Feel it wash over our faces and splashing down our necks and throats. It trickles down our arms, into our hands, and throughout the circle from right to left. It travels down our bodies, mixing with the energy of the Earth, the energy of the Goddess, exploding into a brilliant shade of purple. It mixes as it travels downward. Down. Down. Healing us. Balancing us. Down. Down into our stomach and pelvis. Down into our legs and feet. Down into the Mother, and out into the universe, where it continues to dance the spiral, with planets, and stars, and galaxies. We are here, in this place. We are alive. We have power. We are connected to the Earth and the universe. Take of this energy that which you need, and return to the Earth that which you do not.

Participants, continuing to breathe in a rhythm, draw in the energy until each individual feels ready to return it. This is done by laying your palms flat on the ground, or even by lying down, letting the excess energy trickle and sink into the ground. It is done.

An edited version of this mediation has been recorded as a PodCast at Wynyfyrd's Meditation Room, and can be found [here](#).

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Choose a crystal or stone that has some meaning to you and hold it in your hand. Sit in a comfortable position and relax. You may wish to read this meditation aloud in a group, or make a tape so that you can use this on your own. Breathe deep. Allow your body to relax. Become aware of tension that may be in your body. Acknowledge it, and breathe. Imagine a soft blue mist all around you. See it swirl and change as it enters your nostrils and flows down your lungs. See it flowing downward until it reaches an area just below your navel. There it compresses into a ball

of brilliant blue light. With each breath, it glows brighter. Breathe into it. Now breathe into those areas of your body that are holding tension. Allow the blue light to softly caress your muscles, releasing the tension as you exhale. Breathe deep.

From where your body is touching the floor, you begin to feel a strange sensation. Cords of energy, like the roots from a tree, are forming there, and traveling down into the Earth. With your awareness, follow them down, deep into the Earth. There is darkness all around you. You begin to feel as if you are falling. Down, down. Spiraling downward into the dark Earth. Breathe deep.

The stone in your hand begins to tingle or get warm and you can now hear a strange humming coming from the stone. Almost like singing, unlike any that you have heard with your ears. You focus your awareness on it, and it pulls you towards itself. The singing grows stronger and suddenly, the singing is all around you. You notice that you are no longer in your own world. You have traveled to another place, a place inside the stone. There is an entire landscape here, although it may be different from ones that you are used to.

Stand now to face the North (whatever feels like North) and see what there is to see and hear. What do you feel from this place? Examine the details of the North, and then turn to face the East (again, whatever feels like East) and observe the landscape. Allow yourself to take in all there is to see, and feel. Turn now to face the South and examine what there is to see and feel. Turn to the West and do the same. Now turn to the North again. Breathe deep. Turn now to the center and see what this place holds for you. You have just completed your magick circle. You stand now in sacred space that extends as far as you can imagine. Above, below, within, without—all are sacred, and protected here.

Raise your arms to the sky as if praising it. Call down the power of the stone through your body. Invite it to merge with your own that its' message may be known to you. You may receive a sign, or you may just have a feeling of power. Whatever the sensation, allow it to move freely through you. Feel this to its fullest. What gesture would represent this feeling? Perform your special gesture. Now think of a special word or sound that you can associate with this feeling. Say it out loud or to yourself. You can use these techniques later to call back this special power. Give yourself the time that you need to experiment with these tools.

Now you may wish to explore this new world. If there is a direction that you feel drawn to, allow yourself to travel there, knowing that you walk in sacred space. Examine the ground you are walking on. Is it hard or soft? Rough or smooth? What kind of things are in this place? Do you hear anything? Sense anything? Allow the essence of this place to fill you.

When you have examined this place to its fullest, you may journey back to your circle. If you have any questions that you'd like to ask, do so now, knowing that the answer will come to you in some fashion. Stand in the center of your circle, and thank the center for

being here with you on your journey. Face the North and see if anything has changed. Turn to the West and thank the West for being present with you today. Turn to the South and thank the South. Turn to the East and give thanks for its' protection and guidance. Now turn to the North. Give thanks and mentally open the circle. The circle is open but forever unbroken.

Breathe deep. You begin to feel your body raise into the air. Softly, with each breath you float gently upward, upward, until you are surrounded only by darkness. The singing you once heard is around you again, but fading, drifting away into the dark. You can feel the stone in your hand once again as you breathe deep. You float upward and you can feel your body more clearly now. The image of the room you are now in comes more clearly into view as you breathe deep. Your consciousness now aligns with your body and is anchored into place. Clap your hands together 3 times and say your name out loud. Feel the edges of your body to remind yourself where you are.

You may wish to eat or drink something as doing so encourages a feeling of groundedness. Doing this, or a similar meditation on a regular basis will encourage a personal connection between you and the world of the stones. Feel free to change the meditation to suit your individual needs.

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The East is where the sun rises, and so is where all things begin. Sit and face the East and say "Honor to the Sacred Air." Close your eyes and begin to breathe in a rhythm,

allowing your breath to connect you to the powers of Air. Feel how your breath moves in a circle. Notice how it ebbs and flows, like the wind. Imagine your breath as a great wind, rushing and roaring over and through you. Make noises like the wind.

Imagine yourself standing on a mountain top. Feel the wind blow past your face and shoulders. Feel the vastness of this place. Continue to breathe it in. Above you flies a hawk, circling. Smell the freshness of the air, and imagine a bright yellow pentagram hovering before you. Know that this is a gateway to the elemental realm of Air, and that all the powers of Air emanate from this place: the powers of thought, the mind, the power to know. Focus on the center of the pentagram and call out:

"Bright Lord of the Air, open the gate to me that I might Know."

Imagine the winds of change blowing through you. Imagine your breath merging with the wind, the clouds. Allow yourself to feel this energy for awhile. Now, imagine a yellow flame, from the center of the pentagram, streaming towards you. It is the essence of all that Air is. See it touching your right foot, permeating your being, giving you the power to Know. When you feel sufficiently energized, allow the flame to return to the pentagram.

In your strongest hand, hold (or imagine) a wand. It can be of any length, shape, or substance so long as it makes you feel powerful. Know that the wand is a tool of the Air, a tool of the mind. It is an extension of your consciousness into the real world and used to direct power. Feel the power of your mind. Know that you have the ability to influence others and sense the awesome responsibility that comes with this power. Remember a time when you had to stand up for what you Knew, a time when you had to make a difficult choice—and followed it through. Let that feeling flow through you, and out through the wand towards the Eastern Gate, as a connecting link. Feel your oneness with the Air, with your mind, the power to Know.

Know that the Air is always around you to lend inspiration. Thank the Air by saying:

"I thank you for my breath. I thank you for my thoughts. I give thanks to the Sacred Air!"

Imagine the pentagram floating away into the distance, followed by the hawk. Thank the God by saying:

"Thanks to You, bright Lord of the Air! Blessed be!"

Return to normal awareness.

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About this capture

Moving westward, toward the bay, we experience the energies of water. Face West and breathe deep. As you breathe in a rhythm, allow your body to float freely in the darkness. You begin to see a light ahead of you. As you focus your attention on it, you are pulled forward until you can see the setting Autumn sun reflected in the great ocean before you. You stand on the edge, between the worlds of land and sea, of light and dark, watching the waves lap up upon the shore. You can see both the sun and the moon in the sky. You begin to wonder if the sun is setting or rising; time makes no appearance here—you stand in twilight.

Off in the distance, just above the pink-orange sun, you can make out what appears to be a deep blue pentagram hovering over the surface of the water. You contemplate the waves for a moment, and then, with a deep breath, you enter the water.

It is cool all around you. You can feel the water support your weight, allowing you to relax completely. The currents begin to take you, and you rock and sway with them, riding the surface of ocean. You allow yourself to float on your back, feeling the ocean all around you, feeling the rolling movement of the waves. You can hear only the ocean now, as you float away from land altogether, and drift towards the glowing pentagram in the distance.

Breathe deep. You drift and float, rock, and sway along with the waters. Feel the immensity of the ocean. It is all around you, as far as you can see. The ocean is where all life began. It is ancient life and ancient feeling. The horizon meets the surface of the water. Feel the vastness here. Feel the quietness and the age. Allow your

consciousness to float with the waves. Feel your body merge with the ocean. Feel how you are floating in the womb of the Goddess. Find the tides of power in your body. Find your emotions—anger, joy, sorrow, grief, love. Allow yourself to truly feel. Feel the liquid in your body rise up, and then fall—like the tides. Ebb and flow. Be with this energy for a moment.

Now you feel something move past your leg. Something is here with you. It has followed you here. You see a great serpent swimming and crashing around you, playing with you. Take some time to commune with the serpent, to connect. It splashes around you for a moment, but then seems to want to lead you somewhere further west—towards the pentagram. There is still quite a distance to cover, and it would lead you farther from shore than you already are! When you have summed up your courage, take a deep breath, put your arms around the serpent and hold on!

The serpent takes you beneath the waves at an amazing speed. You feel the water smooth all around you as you shoot forward toward your goal. Faster, faster. Further, and further. You begin to wonder how long your breath will last, and then you emerge into the twilight once again, floating beneath a glowing blue pentagram. The serpent lets out a great roar and then swims away, leaving you to your task. You gaze at the star as you float in the water. Say:

"Hail Mother of the Oceans! Open the gate to me that I may Dare!"

You lay on your back in the water, floating with the waves. The waves are like emotions. You can feel them rise up within you, and then splash down again. They can be soft and calm. Or they can be violent and fearsome. Remember a time when you felt deep emotion. Maybe a time of great elation, or a time of intense sorrow. Allow yourself to feel that feeling again—here within the safety of the nurturing waters. Let the feeling flow over you, rising and building within you.

As your emotions deepen, the sky opens up and rain falls upon you. It splashes on the waves, giving you courage, and new energy. Feel the energy of the rain. Feel how it is really your energy. Notice how it calls images up from within you. Memories. Dreams. Intuition—this is the realm of Water. Reach down to your belt and hold your chalice. With your strongest hand, hold it up so that the rain can be collected within. When your cup is full say:

"Powers of Water,
powers of the tides of my being,
Ebb and flow within me.
Let my feelings run deep as the oceans,
that I may Dare to touch my self.
By the waters of Her womb,
Be with me always!"

Drink deep, and allow the water to nourish you. Take in all that power. Let it flow

through you. As you connect with your feelings, a blue light from the center of the pentagram shines on your right shoulder (or right hand), connecting you to the realm of water. Breathe this power in to your body, and allow it to merge with your blood, with your fluids. Allow it to charge you with its essence. Become the chalice and allow yourself to be filled. When you have taken in enough energy, splash some water on the pentagram and allow it to fade away. Say:

"Hail Mother of the Oceans! May the waters ever flow through me. Blessed be!"

The serpent returns and begins to swim in a circle around you. Round and round. Changing, flowing. The waters begin to swirl and change. You find yourself floating in darkness. Return to normal awareness.

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About this capture

The Beginning of Magick

by Storm Faerywolf

Many introductory books on magick and meditation discuss the importance of the meditative technique known as Grounding. Simply put, "Grounding" is an exercise designed to allow the human energy-body (or aura, if you prefer) to connect with the energy-body of the Earth. This connection forms the basis for an energetic relationship that is both beneficial and protective. When grounded we are in a state of hyper relaxation; a sort of energized calmness that allows deeper, and safer access to our Power, our psychic natures. It allows us to draw energy from the Earth, and helps to prevent harmful energies from disrupting our psychic balance. It is an important first step.

It is a process that I find myself returning to again and again. I have had time while writing material for my classes, as well as in my own private studies, to experience more deeply some of the energetic subtleties that are part of Grounding and Trance.

Most books that describe Grounding techniques focus mainly on visualization. This is an important skill, but far less important than feeling.

Feeling is an energetic sense that can be described as being somewhere between tactile sensation and thought. An example of this would be the memory of a physical sensation; you're not remembering it in your physical body, but its not quite just a memory in your head either. You are Feeling it in your energy-body.

It is through the controlled use of this perceptive skill that we are able to consciously direct the flows of energy, our own or otherwise. What follows is a very simple exercise, but one that is meant to be used on a consistent basis. You will find that the visual aspect of this meditation is minimal. Feel free to change it completely to suit your needs. What is stressed here is the energetic sense, the feeling of the steps involved.

. . .

Sit or stand in a comfortable position so that your back is straight. If standing, bend your knees slightly so as not to block the energy flow. Take in a few slow deep breaths through the nose, slowing even more on the exhale.

Focus your attention on your Power center, a space just below your navel, in the center of your body. Imagine, as you continue to breathe, that your Power is emerging from this space in the form of a light. Take some time to feel this Power as it grows with your

breath. If you are new to meditation you may need to practice this first step several times until the sensation is definite.

Now, continuing to breathe deeply, imagine that your Power is elongating downward in the form of a cord, pressing straight down through your physical body and down into the Earth. Really take your time to feel this. The sensation should be as if the cord were an extension of your body, of your awareness. You should notice how your own personal energy feels as your cord travels deeper into the ground. Allow this cord to travel downward with your breath until it reaches the center of the Earth. Feel this center as a great vortex of Power that your cord merges with. Imagine that as your cord is anchored into place, it gets pulled tight, pulling you slightly closer to the Earth's center. When you have achieved this, you may then draw from the Earth's Power by pulling it up through your cord, feeling it as it rises to meet your body. Be aware of how it feels when it enters your body and allow it to fill both your physical body, and your aura. Again, give yourself plenty of time in order to really feel the energy. When you feel that you have done enough, gently remind yourself of the place in which you are meditating, remembering the room you are in. Then open your eyes.

When practiced consistently, this exercise will begin to deepen your perceptual skills so that you may begin to experience other types of energies. Experiment with different colors and visualization aids to see what works best for you. (Many imagine that they are in the form of a tree, whose taproot is the energy cord.) Try moving the energy in different ways. See if you can move it through your body and back into the Earth again. When these simple skills have been mastered you can then begin to create new forms for the energy to take, such as moving the energy through your hands and into an object, or from your Power center and into a star. The only limit is your imagination.

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About this capture
Creating Sacred Space

by Storm Faerywolf

Many of the religious and spiritual traditions that have graced this wondrous planet have common elements, not the least of which is the concept of sacred space. Whether this is seen as a consecrated church, a synagogue, a river, or a grove of trees, sacred space is a place of communion, a place where one can touch the sacredness of the Divine, and in doing so, experience the sacredness of being.

My religious tradition, Witchcraft (the [re-constructions of] pre-Judaic shamanistic traditions of ancient Europe) recognizes that while the Earth in Her entirety is sacred, a specialized sacred space can be created/recognized when desired.

The foundation for the rituals known in Witchcraft stem from what is perhaps the oldest symbol known to humankind. In Paleolithic times, primitive wo/man drew and painted circles to represent the womb of the Goddess, who was the primary deity, due to Her ability to give birth to the world. Later, this ancient symbol was seen to represent eternity, the moon and sun, the cycle of the seasons, the world, protection, and the cycle of birth, life, death, and rebirth. "Casting the Circle", is a term that is used to describe the setting up of ritual space, a space that has been psychically 'cleared' of extraneous energies, and that has had protective boundaries erected.

When we gather in a circle, we face each other and are able to maintain eye contact. The obvious hierarchy existent in the 'mainstream' religions does not appear: We are all equal, there is no central figure who preaches their way to the masses. Also, when we are within a Circle, our psychic abilities are more readily, and safely, controlled.

During a ritual, especially one in which magick is done, the circle is used to contain the power, so that it may be focused and released when it has reached its apex. Many of us form a Circle prior to meditation, or before performing psychic exercises. Using a circle enables us to "fine tune" our own psychic potential.

Below, I give a very basic formula for the casting of a circle. You don't have to be a Witch to benefit from the energetic shifts that this exercise can produce. Practice with it. See how it feels. Feel free to elaborate on it, or even change it completely, at your discretion.

Casting the Circle

The circle itself need not be marked out on the floor, although many find this an enjoyable method. Take a small bowl of sea salt (representing Earth, our bodies) and put a few grains on your tongue. Next, take a cup of spring water (representing our emotions) and pour some into the bowl of salt. Sprinkle some around you. Feel the water on your face. Light some incense (Air, our minds), and light a candle (Fire, our will) thus charging yourself with the four elements.

Beginning in the north (or another direction that seems appropriate), and holding your

hands outwards, palms out and down, begin to cast the circle by visualizing a blue flame, emanating from your hands as you slowly turn clockwise. (You may wish to simply visualize these steps while you are meditating, see what feels right to you.) Visualize the flame leaving a trail on the floor, to mark the circle. See it begin to gently hover in the air, until it creates a luminous "egg" around the area, . When you can "feel" the egg around you, you may wish to make a definitive statement, like:

By stone and wind,
by flame and sea.
This circle is raised.

Feel the last line as a statement of fact, an affirmation. Feel the power of the elements in your body. You have now created a psychic "safehouse", a space where you are more in control of your psychic abilities.

It is important to point out that once the circle is cast, no one should enter or leave. To do so would break the circle, and would allow the energy to be leaked away. If someone does need to leave, however, an opening can be "molded" by visualizing a sturdy opening forming on the surface of the egg, and shaping that with your hands. Re-seal it in the same fashion.

The circle will remain until it is grounded or dispersed.

Grounding the Circle

When the ritual is ended, the ritual space needs to be grounded, re-balancing your energies and that of the area. This can be done by turning counter-clockwise, while pressing your hands into the edge of the luminous egg. Visualize and feel the energy as being gently directed into your 3rd chakra (your power center, located at your solar plexus), and then downward into the earth, grounding the energy into your body, and connecting you to Mother Earth. Address the four directions and say:

By stone and rain,
by flame, and wind.
The circle is open,
And forever unbroken.
It is done.

It is important to experiment with different methods so that you become accustomed to the flow of energy. Try using favorite poems or songs to raise energy into the Circle. See if you can "feel" the boundaries of the Circle when cast. You may want to raise a circle when you feel worried, or stressed-out. You can imagine it filled with light of any color, to give you a boost of energy, or to keep you calm when necessary. The important factor is that you are able to maintain a feeling of "safe-space", and a feeling of personal power. Remember: if it feels right to you, it's right. Blessed be.

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About this capture
Dark Before the Dawn:
A Magickal Approach to the Powers of Winter
by Storm Faerywolf

Autumn leaves have fallen and the bite of winter is again in the air (at least for awhile in our changeable California climates!). To my ancestors (the ancient Celts) this was a time of reflection, of introspection. The last harvest had already been reaped in order to supply enough food to keep the clan fed for the harsh winter months, and now the families would gather around a fire exchanging stories, myths, and dreams—the food of the soul.

Winter was also seen as a time of renewal—death containing the seed of new life—as evidenced from the almost universally held beliefs honoring the winter's solstice—the longest night of the year after which the rising sun would be honored, and the energy of the now increasing light was recognized. Metaphorically this was the birth of the Divine Child from the womb of the Goddess, and evergreen trees were decorated to celebrate the powers of growth and eternal life. From these ancient practices we derive our modern day celebration of Christmas.

To modern Witches the winter's solstice is still honored as the return of the sun, and seen as the point of a great energetic shift of natural power on the Earth. After this point, the solar powers begin to wax giving us an "upward flow" of natural energy which we can tap into for manifestation and healing. What follows is a simple ritual that you can perform in order to attune yourself to the flow of natural power that is the winter's solstice.

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For this ritual you will need a yellow or orange candle, a spicy incense (cinnamon works great!), a piece of stationary, a pen, a bowl, an ashtray, and an ice cube.

Ideally you would want to perform this ritual on the night of December 20th—the night prior to the solstice—but feel free to do as Spirit moves you.

First light the incense, feeling the spicy, fiery energies rise with the smoke. Then take your candle and carve some picture or symbol of the sun on it. This will represent the solar energy for our ceremony. Next, take your pen and paper and write a list of all the positive influences you would like to increase in your self—kindness, prosperity, etc. If you are artistically inclined, you may wish to draw a picture representing these qualities, or perhaps write a poem—allow your creative energy to flow!

Now go and get your ice cube. This represents the harshness of winter—and our own tendencies to allow our energies to freeze-up, to stagnate. Think of all the little things that you do to sabotage yourself—procrastination, low-self esteem—whatever behaviors or energies that are preventing you from being as fulfilled and happy as you deserve to be—and imagine that they are flowing into the ice cube. It will have started to melt somewhat at this point, so, making sure that you allow it to melt into the bowl, light the candle with the following or similar affirmation:

As the sun's light strengthens, so do I strengthen.
As this ice melts, so do my impurities melt away.

If you'd like you can repeat this to yourself while you focus on the symbolic energy working in your life. Focus intently on the ice cube as it melts. You may even use the candle flame to help melt the cube (just be careful not to burn your fingers!). When the ice is entirely melted into the bowl, take the paper and burn it in the flame of the candle, knowing that as it burns it is transformed into pure energy and is now released into the Universe to bring about the positive changes that you are asking for. Feel each and every positive quality in your self—if you asked for courage, imagine what it would feel like to be courageous, if you asked for patience, feel yourself waiting effortlessly—let your imagination have free reign! Place the paper in the ashtray and allow it to burn itself out while the candle burns down completely. Take the bowl of melted ice outside and throw the water onto some plants—the negative energy will be transformed into something positive by the Earth Herself. Now you will hold onto your paper ashes until after the sunrise on (circa) December 21st—the winter's solstice!

If the paper burned completely then scatter the ashes outside to the winds, if not then you may wish to bury the remains in the Earth, or in the soil of a potted plant, to allow it to transmute its energy into growth. It is done!

You may wish to change this ritual to better suit your individual needs. As always: Do what feels right to you! There are no right or wrong ways to perform magick as long as your intent is pure. Experiment with it and see what comes up for you. Happy Solstice,

and Blessed Be!

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Honoring Springtime

by Storm Faerywolf

The Wheel of the Year has turned from the harshness of Winter again, bringing us into the energetic realm of Spring. Traditionally speaking, Spring has been associated with the prospering of life, and with new romances ("Spring Fever"). We also hear something about "Spring Cleaning" which is a time to get rid of the clutter of Winter in order to make room for new life to flourish. Different religious traditions have provided myths and rituals concerning these energetic shifts in order to help us incorporate them into our daily experience. The Christian traditions celebrate Easter at this time, which glorifies the resurrection of Christ and can be seen as a metaphor for the rebirth of nature—new life arising from death. Modern Witches continue to celebrate the ancient festival of Eostre, whose name is that of the Teutonic Goddess of the Earth, and view the season as a time of fertility and growth. The origins of dyed egg hunts, and even that of the elusive seasonal rabbit, lie in the heart of these ancient traditions when life depended on the fertility of the livestock, and the abundance of the harvest.

We know that this is a time when life begins anew, with new wildflowers on the hillside and baby animals scurrying amongst the trees. Now is a time to get in touch with nature, and the natural rhythms of potential and growth, but what does that mean to someone who lives in a city where the greatest dose of nature seems to come from the local park or even one's own backyard?

In the modern age our busy lives seem little concerned with agricultural abundance, but fertility as a flow of energy is much more than just a bountiful harvest! To connect with the seasonal tide of this time is to enrich our internal landscape, allowing us greater opportunity to allow our own creative ideals to flourish, connecting us with our own deep self. Just as the ancients used this time to begin planting the years' crops, so can we

'plant the seeds' of self-transformation and then extend this change into the world around us.

What follows is a simple ritual that you can use to connect with the energies of the season. Feel free to change it to suit your needs as there is no "one right way" for everyone. The lesson of spring is one of power through the diversity of life.

For this ritual you will need a candle, a small packet of seeds (flower seeds, vegetable seeds, etc.), a spoon or small shovel, an egg, a felt tip marker, a small pot or an area outdoors suitable for planting, a small token of offering (whatever you feel is appropriate), some water and, a good attitude. I will assume that you will perform this out of doors, but simple adjustments can be made in order to accommodate for an interior working.

First, take your candle in your hands and say something to yourself like "I invite the springtime into my life. I am blessed by the Universe." Light the candle and imagine its' light all around you giving you the energy to start a new way of life.

Next, take the marker and write the name of something that you would like to accomplish on the egg. It can be something like "New Job", or "Art" if you need to devote more time to your creative endeavors, again whatever is important to you. Place the egg on the ground in front of the lit candle. Meditate on them for a moment.

Now, take your spoon or shovel and dig a small hole in the earth. Imagine you are "working the fields of your internal garden", making it ready to receive new ideas and ways of being. Make sure that you feel the earth with your hands as you dig.

Take your packet of seeds and plant some in the ground. You may wish to say an affirmation for each one, such as "I have more time to write", or "Job offers are pouring in." Take your time and really feel that each seed is a message to the earth that will be answered in its' own way.

When you have finished planting, pick up the egg and hold it in your hands. Let your hands warm it as you visualize your goal as already being completed. For example, see yourself happily working at a new job that is perfect for you, or merrily signing copies of your latest book! When you can see every last detail, break the egg into the hole and bury it along with the seeds. You can either let the candle burn out (if you plan on staying to watch it!) or you can blow it out to send the energy on its' way. (Follow your intuition for this one.) Water the seeds and leave your offering. Now all that's left to do is to allow the universe to provide you with what you've asked for. This is best done by doing something on the physical plane to 'coax' the energy along (such as getting a small notebook to write in, or turning in job resumes.). We have to be willing to meet the universe half-way! Most importantly—don't be discouraged if it doesn't manifest right away. Sometimes we need to work through and discard certain energetic blocks before we can manifest our desires. (Maybe that's where the idea of Spring Cleaning comes in!) Blessed be!

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Increasing Magickal Power
by Storm Faerywolf

I've received a lot of questions concerning the operations of magick. Many believe (as Hollywood would have you) that for a spell to be cast, you must first collect the proper tools and materials. For instance, many have come to me convinced that the magickal operation that they wish to perform vitally depends on the use of a particular color candle (Red for love, Green for money, etc.) What many fail to realize is that the only tool that is necessary is a strengthened Will.

Much has been written on the subject of the Will. Some have defined it as Intent, but that definition seems to be more associated with the processes of the mind alone, leaving the realms of Spirit untouched. I have heard it also described as "character": self-discipline, honesty, conviction. While this definition touches many of the key aspects that are necessary to understand the Will, it too fails to elaborate on the intensely spiritual quality that is at the heart of this very real power.

Perhaps it is because of its' spiritual implications that it is so difficult to describe. The ways of Spirit seldom settle for mere words to praise them. They must be experienced, truly felt.

Take some time with the following exercise. Give yourself some time to really get into it. Turn your phone's ringer off, lock your door. Relax.

Breathe deeply. Every work of magick must begin with the breath. In many cultures, the word for breath is the same word for Spirit. Breathe it in!

Close your eyes, and allow yourself to relax. Become aware of your body, where you

are tensed or relaxed. Imagine that your breath is rushing into those tense areas, filling them. With your exhale allow the tension to flow out from you on your breath. Give yourself awhile with this.

Now is where we really get to use our imaginations. Pretend (because any child worth their weight in Fairy Dust will tell you that the power of pretending is a formidable one) that you have power. Imagine that the forces that drive the Universe are flowing through you. You may wish to say a favorite prayer or poem that inspires you. Or you can say something like:

"I call to the True Source of all Creation,
to the One Power that is also Many,
Blow through me like a cleansing wind,
Burn in me like a raging flame,
Flow through me like a rushing river,
Be in me like an ancient stone,
Guide me like the brightest star."

"See" it like a Blue Fire that permeates everything. "Feel" it as a real force flowing into and through your body. Allow it to rush inward with your inhale, and to flow outward with your exhale. Get to know it. Become one with it. (Don't be discouraged if this part takes some time. Real magick takes effort. If it didn't, everybody would be doing it.)

The important thing now is to experiment with it. Try singing with it. (This is great in the shower.). Try moving it around your body. This can be done by placing your hands out in front of you palms facing each other. Imagine that this energy is traveling from one hand to the other. Try changing its color. Notice what it feels like to you. Some feel it as a tingling, or as a heat. Some describe it like a coolness or even simply as a "knowing", whatever the sensation, physical or otherwise, focus on it until it becomes a familiar one. This is the first step to performing magick (and one of the most important, so don't underestimate its power.)

When you feel confident running energy in this way, you can try "programming" it with specific qualities (Love, Courage, etc.) by focusing intently on the quality and noticing the flow of energy that accompanies it. You can then imagine this energy into a stone and carry it with you, or you can imagine it into food before you eat. The possibilities truly are endless and with each new experiment you will have raised your capacity for magick!

The important thing to remember about these exercises is that consistency is the key. It's not going to do you any good if you just do it a couple of times and then forget about it. Try to perform them at least a couple of times a week. Then you will be on track to increasing your power. Blessed be!

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About this capture
What is the F(a)eri(e) Tradition?
by Storm Faerywolf

I sit in a circle of my own design, making call to the powers that surround and guard us. I listen for their answer and from beyond the firelight it comes. Forces from the outer darkness make themselves known to me; Dian na Glas, the Blue God, comes with childlike vigor, dancing silken spirals, the music of the spheres alive in his footsteps. Mari, full-breasted and powerful, complete and bountiful, emerges from within my cells, and calls to me, asking that I walk with Her feet.

Through my breath, I commune. My fetch, pulsing, glowing, delicate and fierce, throbs with power, it's undulating rhythm lulling me into a place where I know power. The Blue God- no longer separate from myself- flows like silver water from the depths of my GodSelf to quench the thirst of my souls, bringing with His sweet nectar the drunkenness of the Divine, and I dance. I dance in circles and rejoin the spinning of the universe with each step. I am touched by the Gods, and my dance is theirs.

When I first heard of the F(a)eri(e) tradition of witchcraft, it was in the pages of Starhawk's book *The Spiral Dance*. I remember being almost entranced by the (brief) description of the Blue God, the laughing god of love, as she described him, wondering about his stories, his touch, and longing to look upon his face. For me there was a connection. Although I couldn't have known it then, I was touched by His power; this Deity who dances in the springtime of the soul. It was this touch that eventually led me to find a teacher and to study the wild road we call Feri.

When listening to the stories of others I find certain ideas that are commonly used to describe personal experiences of the tradition. Of the tradition itself, it is often referred to as a "Chaos" tradition, referring in part perhaps to our particular relationship to the Star Goddess, the raging cosmos pregnant with possibility. Being a "left hand path" we embrace the fullest spectrum of possibility; we bask in the sunlight of the body, and

revel in the darkness of the soul. The natural state of the soul unfettered by conditioning and restraint is sometimes referred to as "The Black Heart of Innocence", and is a phrase that poetically evokes the raw-ness of pure experience, forming the basis of what may be called the Feri perspective. Far from being a mental construct, this is a personal relationship to the universe, a relationship which does not seek to contain or even necessarily to define our experience with it. At it's core it is simple. We open, and the power flows through us, taking what form it will. It is a form of shamanism in the truest sense of the word.

In a tradition that is inherently shamanic, practitioners draw inspiration from many sources. Whether these are an established liturgy, the appearance of a certain plant or animal, a ritual given by a teacher, or a song learned while in trance, they do not in and of themselves define the practice as a whole. It is the experiential perspective relationship to them that is the unifying factor, and it is this relationship with which we are most concerned.

We are guided by those beings who are attached to this tradition: the Guardians, the Feri Gods, and join with them in spirit, allowing them to move through us, changing us forever. Our view that the Gods are real (as opposed to being simply psychological constructs or metaphor, as seen in many branches of the modern Craft) reflects our relationship with them, revealing it to be both personal and dynamic. When we call on our Gods, and they move through us, we have been changed even to our deepest levels. We know, in our bodies, the joy of Nimue at the Summer Solstice, or the dark power of the Arddu in the dead of winter's night.

Unlike most other branches of modern witchcraft Feri is not a safe tradition. As seekers into the outer dark, bringing only our wits with us into these uncharted territories of the spirit, we find ourselves most often vulnerable and alone. Searching for avenues to power and healing for both ourselves and for the land, we scratch and claw our way through ourselves, being confronted by our demons, our fears, and our true desires. Through preparation, both psychological and spiritual, we are taught how to touch the source of the Faerie power, and how to handle it once we have.

Another distinguishing factor of our path is initiation through the passing and use of the Faerie current of power. When we are initiated we are connected to the living current of energy that is unique to the tradition. We become conscious channels, allowing it to flow through us and into the world around us. This is the true function of any priest/ess: to be a mediator of universal power.

But what is the Feri tradition? How do we know when we are practicing Feri or we have moved into another realm? If Feri asserts personal experience over established liturgy, then how can we be certain that we, as a whole, are even practicing the same thing?

It has been suggested, in some circles, that material which varies from the original (or current) teachings of Victor Anderson is not part of the actual tradition. Being the GrandMaster of Feri, the initiatory lineage of each practitioner traces ultimately back to

him. He is, in one sense, the origin of our tradition, being responsible for bringing it into the world at large, through his teaching and training of others who have carried the power outward to share with even more. Does this mean that material and insights created and used by other initiates of Feri should be viewed as being separate from the tradition itself? If we are practicing a tradition that is at its core an energetic relationship with the Feri power/Deities, then we cannot expect the outer forms to remain unchanged if we want the tradition to evolve and flourish. By asserting that we must always use the same outer form constitutes a type of dogmatic thinking that is dangerous in a shamanic tradition. To do so requires that we invalidate the unique experiences that we have when mediating the Gods; powers that are very real and alive.

The Feri power when mediated into the world through each of us, takes on other forms as deemed by the power, the Deities, and of course the individual practitioner themselves. To expect it to always conform to earlier forms/teachings is to deny its very real life-force; its ability to evolve as we each come to understand its beauty and simple complexity. Without the outer forms of ritual, invocation, and symbolism, we are left with only one thing that defines us as Feri: our relationship with the energetic current. It is this point that marks the validity of our tradition; we are Feri because we are of Feri; we have been remade into willing vessels of its' power. It must, by its deeply personal nature, touch each of us differently. It is these differences which, I believe, validate the path, not detract from it. By sharing our experience and perspectives with each other we become stronger for it. May we have the courage to always do so.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #1.

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The Queer Craft: Rethinking Magickal Polarity
By Storm Faerywolf

“Opposites attract.”

“Like attracts like.”

“As above; so below.”

In most Wiccan traditions of modern witchcraft there is a strong emphasis on sexual polarity as a model for magickal/ritual working. Simply stated, this is the belief that magickal energy is generated most strongly (and perhaps only) by a male and female working partnership, a concept that was popularized by the Gardnerian tradition and has been passed down in some form to the vast majority of modern witchcraft traditions being practiced today. Even in traditions where this polarity is seen to be internalized (i.e. the idea that we each contain an inner male and female which strive for balance regardless of our physical gender) we find that, ultimately, the model we have adopted is still a heterosexist one: that of polarized or complimentary forces being identified as male and female, thereby enshrining this model as the template for all real relationships whether they be romantic, magickal, or otherwise. For Queers this can be a dangerous practice.

When I use the term “Queer” it is an attempt to reach poetically (and therefore magickally) into the realm of “the Other”, the walker between the worlds, the dancer at the gate of twilight. Being Queer is a vitally important aspect of who I am; of how I relate to the Universe. It is much more than sharing my bed with another man. It colors my perception, focusing my awareness in a way that is different from that of the mainstream.

My own experience has shown me that as a gay man I exist outside the parameters of “normal” society, and because of this provide a necessary function for society at large. Like all ways into Power this is a double-edged sword, a blessing and a curse. Because gender roles are imprinted on each of us from even the very beginnings of our lives, and because my natural inclination was unlike the stereotypical masculine role that was expected of me, I began to experiment with other modes of being. After having been wrapped up in a “cocoon” of self-denial and protective obscurity I had emerged transformed from my closet as a being of power; my perspective, being proudly different, became my source of strength, a formidable ally. I had learned a simple truth: that I was fine just the way I was. I wasn't defectively “in between” maleness and femaleness (a common misunderstanding of the Queer experience in general), but instead I represented something “Other” that could at times encompass traits usually described as masculine or feminine, but also had qualities that were beyond the normal limits of both. By standing outside, not only was I better able to see the limitations of the mainstream perspective, but I also allowed the mainstream itself to better know who it was and where it stood. By simply being what it isn't, Queer people are able to reflect the mainstream back to itself, providing a reference point for it to better understand its place in the Universe. This power is not found in spite of who we are, but because of who we are. Whether this manifests as artistic expression, shamanic power, sexual adventurism (or even a beautifully decorated home!) we find commonalties in experience.

Although I have heard from others on numerous occasions who are unable to reconcile either their own Queer-ness or that of others with the overt sexual fertility of modern Paganism, being gay in the Craft has never been an issue for me. I realize that some still believe that Witchcraft can only be performed with the male/female magickal current, but that only reflects their own relationship to the Source. There are many pathways to power; many models of spirit. Heterosexuality can be one, the male/female polarity spins into effect causing the birth of new life. Homosexuality is another, we borderline the ecstatic, bringing art and ideas into being.

It is my understanding that what we call "sexual orientation" represents an energetic vibration that manifests in the physical realm as sexual preference. Every quality that we possess, everything that we are is the vibration of our soul(s), whether it is sexuality, artistic talent, or athletic prowess. When we put it all together I imagine it to be rather like a song, the melody and rhythm being the orchestration of who we are on a soul level. Part of Witchcraft for me has been getting to know this song, and singing it with power.

The "Sacred Hermaphrodite", the conjoining of the male/female principal is sometimes invoked as the spiritual force that embodies the Queer experience. It is inaccurate to believe, however, that this is what being gay is: a place in between male and female. It can be that, at times, but it is not only that. The Yin/Yang model doesn't accurately describe the Universe in its entirety, just as the God/Goddess model fails to do the same. These are maps and metaphors that we have set into place in an attempt to have a relationship to the cosmos at large, but we should understand that these models themselves can not completely define the Universe. No model ever could. "Whatever you may say something is, it is not! ... the map is not the territory ... the word is not the thing." (Alfred Korzybski)

This isn't meant to imply that the Gods are merely psychological constructs or feel good stories. The Gods are real, but we should understand that they are not bound by physical limitations, and being non-human in origin are much more "fluid" in their existence. Gods can appear female and Goddesses male, just as they appear as a deer, or a stone, or a thunderstorm.

As an alternative to viewing polarity in heterosexist terms, we should feel empowered to adopt additional models as pathways into magickal perspectives at large. This not only enables Queer practitioners with an energetic map that could potentially speak directly to our own experience, but also provides everyone, regardless of gender identity, with a deepened understanding of magick, polarity, and ourselves.

There are numerous symbols that we can draw upon to this end. For example, the turning of the seasons could be mythically expressed in the concept of the Oak King and the Holly King (or the Bright Mother and Dark Mother) representing the light and dark halves of the year, together becoming the cycle of eternity. In this example, polarity is seen in same gendered terms, but still retains the essential quality of complimentary forces.

We can also turn our attention to non-gender specific examples of polarity, such as Rhythm and Melody. This could be seen as bass drum and flute, each representing different powers, but coming together to provide the whole picture, in this example a musical one. This brings to light the idea that polarities are not pairs of energies in opposition to one another, but are instead complimentary forces in every meaning of the term. With this in mind, we might also see polarities in motion and stillness, form and formlessness, holding and releasing, feeling and knowing. As our understanding of energy increases, so does our ability to experience it, and to comprehend.

But why should we limit ourselves to just two forces? Our understanding of physics has demonstrated four fundamental forces at play in the universe: strong force, gravity, electromagnetism, and weak force. These last two have already been demonstrated as being part of the same force and in fact it is the unification of all of these forces into a singular unified field theory, which is the Holy Grail of modern physics. In the realm of the mythic this is the quest for the Star Goddess, the primary source of creation, that from which all things are born. The magickal model of polarity most closely resembles at first glance that of electromagnetism; most notably in its observation that negatively and positively charged forces interact to form a current. But it is possible to look beyond the dualistic power, real and strong as it undoubtedly is, and see its place amongst others of equal importance. Many valuable insights can be derived from examining the interactions between not only two, but several forces at once. The power of the three souls in harmony, or the interplay between the four (and five) elements are but two examples that we as Witches should be familiar with. By experimenting with different models we can begin to delve into the unknown and bring back power from the abyss.

Polarities aside, there are other models that we may adopt in order to understand our unique power. One alternative is the concept of resonance, the idea of like powers calling to each other. In a Queer relationship we can see this as two (or more) souls of like gender/vibration singing together creating a harmony. We might imagine a duet and the special quality of singing voices merging together. In psychological terms this is the concept of identification; we see ourselves in our partner, or perhaps those qualities in ourselves that we wish to accentuate. This can be a powerful tool in terms of a magickal practice when applied to the relationships we share with the world, not just our romantic ones. We can see each other, as well as ourselves, in a lover, a star, or a dream. We identify with the world in a very real sense, and by doing so real power is generated. We become more fluid, no longer fixed to our limited illusory personality. When we identify with the world, we become the world.

In Feri we are all familiar with the Iron Pentacle as a central meditational teaching tool of our Craft. It is sometimes taught that the point of Sex represents the attraction of forces that exist in a polarity, but what if this can also be understood to reflect resonance? With this in mind we might imagine the energy of the Sex point to be the underlying energy of existence, calling to itself through our awareness, and then merging with us. In my experience this difference is at once both subtle and distinct, allowing for a more deeply personal relationship with the energy. When used in conjunction with the model of the

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Another alternative might be in the contemplation of Ecstasy, to literally "stand outside ourselves". Though not exclusively, this concept may be very appropriately approached through our sexuality. When consciously directed, energy generated through sexual activity can be a formidable ally in the deepening of perception and the gathering of power. Inspiration can be drawn from the sensations of our bodies, allowing us to express freely whatever arises in our Black Hearts, be it singing, dancing, trancing, or loving. By breaking free from the death grip of the Ego we are finally able to see beyond our normally limited awareness and can begin to touch on those powers which are of primal importance to the health and happiness of our soul(s).

To some, the adoption of alternate models might seem like a triviality, especially those that do not intend to exclusively replace the original. Why a new one if the old still works? I believe that we all can benefit from the interplay of diverse views. It is in the subtle differences of our own unique experiences that make these models personal and powerful when put into practice. As long as we understand that beyond the description lies reality, then we have begun to pierce the veil and perceive the truth, whatever that may be for each of us.

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The Iron Pentacle:
Understanding the Harmonics of Consciousness
by Storm Faerywolf
From sex to pride,
from pride to self,
from self to power,
from power to passion
from passion to sex,
the gate is formed.
By my will the gate is opened.
Blessed be.

onsidered to be a foundational exercise of the Feri, the Iron Pentacle has proven to be a powerful symbol of the inner-work that is stressed so strongly in our tradition. Usually taught to students at or near the beginning of their training in order to provide a symbolic container for the work to come, the pentacle quickly becomes a personal mandala for the student, an energetic map that can lend important clues as to where we are wasting our energy, and provide us opportunities to heal imbalances in our inner selves. It is a talisman of great power.

Briefly, the points can be understood as follows:

The point of Sex conceptually represents the creative power of the Universe. It is both polarity and resonance within the current of Divine energy. It is that point of orgasm in which we open to the Universal dance and participate in its creation and in its destruction within each moment.

The point of Pride is our recognition of our own self-worth and the ability to live fully without reservation, allowing our true nature to shine outward while not giving in to the ego's temptation to compare ourselves to others. It is complete innocence, living fully and unabashedly in the moment.

Self represents our full knowledge of our own potential as well as our limitations along with the knowledge of who we are in relation to others and the Universe at large.

Power is the balanced outpouring of our whole being; the focused harmony of all five points in the pentacle which allows us greater access to our own deep potential. It is the projection of ourselves into the world that causes change, that makes magick. It is never manipulative, for true power exists in its own right and finds revelry in cooperative relationships with other beings and points of view.

Passion is our ability to be open to the fullest experience of feeling, whether that be of the highest bliss, or of the deepest depression. It is the true embodiment of ecstasy.

Taken individually, the points on our pentacle represent important aspects of our consciousness that are normally interpreted in a negative light from the standpoint of mainstream society. Even in those times when an energetic relationship to the conceptual point on the pentacle is one that is encouraged by the mainstream, we find the relationship is usually an unhealthy one. One needs only look to the prevalence of sexual imagery in modern advertising, and the unrealistic expectations that it encourages, for an example of this. Our negative relationships are formed and reinforced each time we compare our bodies to those we see in a magazine, each time we feel “selfish” for accepting a compliment or taking pride in our work, and each time we automatically equate power with corruption.

By restructuring our relationships to these concepts we can begin to balance our world-view through the removal of the negative preconceptions already firmly in place within our psyches. This allows us deeper access to our authentic selves unhindered by cultural conditioning, a state poetically referred to in our tradition as “The Black Heart of Innocence”. ©2003 Storm Faerywolf

It is from this space, this magnificent state of being, that magick is made. Only when we are free from our irrational fears can we begin to truly live, and it is precisely this that the Gods call for us to do. In order to mediate real power into the world (the true function of any priest or priestess) we must first be made pure; we must come to terms with ourselves for exactly who and what we are, and in the face of this truth, begin to live it fully. Easier said than done.

Each point on the pentacle represents a particular wavelength of consciousness that, even when in isolation from the others, is an invaluable aid to the cleansing and development of the psyche. By connecting meditatively to each point, we can begin to discern how its conceptual power flows through us individually, giving us opportunities to notice how we are affected. When I experience the conceptual energy of Pride, for example, I am faced with the possibility of an unhindered boundless wave of self acceptance and love, an experience that, when taken in the greater context of everyday awareness leaves me with the experiential understanding of how well I am or am not actualizing such acceptance within my own life. If I am living from my heart center, then I am validated in that experience. If I am not, then I am reminded of that center, and encouraged, by example, to allow my energies to flow freely, thus cultivating that sense of pride that I am connecting to.

When used early on in training, it is common to meditate on each point in succession, gaining speed with each pass until the conscious mind can no longer attach itself to any one particular concept, blurring them into one flow of power. From Sex, to Pride, to Self, to Power, to Passion, and back to Sex, the points themselves become energetic markers, like bands of color in the spectrum, that stand out in the midst of the greater force, and yet are a necessary part of that force, lending to the experience rather than distracting from it.

When taken together, the points on the Iron Pentacle create a kind of harmony —not

unlike the voices in a choir— that is greater than the sum of its parts. The five conceptual points of our pentacle interlock to create a kind of “psychic gateway” that leads us deeper into the realms of Faery, and into our own power. When we have actualized each point within ourselves, and are able to maintain a simultaneous connection to each of them and their relationships to each other within our consciousness, then we have embarked upon the remarkable journey: We have made the decision to abandon those negative traits forced upon us by the larger society in favor of a healthy relationship to ourselves, and have taken the first real step towards claiming our Divine birthright: We have decided to become more fully human.

But the question must be posed: Why in a shamanic tradition must we focus on tools and tricks that are obviously centered around affecting the psychological well-being of the student? Why not simply have the student enter into therapy and leave the psyche to the psychologists and the witchcraft to the witches?

It would be unwise to think that the realms of the psychological, the spiritual, and the magickal do not, at the very least, intersect. Much of the training work utilized in many of the branches that teach Feri today bear a striking resemblance to deep therapeutic techniques. Breathing exercises, controlled relaxation, and guided introspection are all techniques that are utilized in both therapy and in modern witchcraft, so what, if anything, makes them different?

One difference is the deep spiritual connection of the community at large. In the presence of a teacher the Iron Pentacle becomes a connection point the student has to the greater Feri community, a symbol of how our diverse energies are interconnected and how they can flow together to form a unified working whole. Even if we each have a different understanding of the conceptual points, we have the work itself in common which leads us to a greater kinship with each other, as witches of the Feri clan. The fact that we each may have been taught differently on the subject merely reinforces the significance of the work to the individual; for the power to remain authentic it must, by definition, change from person to person to reflect the psychic make-up of the individual. When confronted with real power, real results occur. The Iron Pentacle, as a working tool, is a beginning point for understanding the Feri reality. For years practitioners of Feri have used these techniques, with much success, and have revised them to suit their individual needs as practicality demands. When I practice the Iron Pentacle I am filled with the knowledge that this is a path that other practitioners have embarked upon; other Feri have used these signposts in order to better understand their relationship to our Gods, the Universe, and themselves. When I practice, I am in good company.

Another major difference is in the very nature of the powers that we, as Feri, are dealing with. The Gods, Goddesses, Guardians, spirits, and powers that we are working with are real and not simply in a metaphorical sense as is seen in many modern traditions of the Craft. When I call upon the Gods they show up, providing me with perspectives that I was previously unaware of, or even leading me into situations where I have opportunity to claim and refine my power, my perceptual relationship to the universe.

In my opinion the exercises utilized in the Feri training are (for the right individual) much more powerful in effect than the standard therapeutic model. In addition to being a more direct way to deal with issues and complexes within the psyche, the magickal model enables the student to develop control of their relationship to their environment, and more importantly, provides an experiential understanding of how the world really works. Instead of just reinforcing the old paradigm of separateness, the magickal model does away with such nonsense and instills the understanding of interconnectedness as an experiential reality.

In light of all of this, the Iron Pentacle is, in one sense, a reminder of how that interconnectedness works on a personal level, thus bringing that understanding out into the world at large.

For many modern witches the symbol of the pentagram with it's five interlocking points has come to represent the interconnected forces of the five natural elemental principals of the Universe working in harmony. It is a reminder that these forces exist in relation to each other, each serving a unique purpose and yet are interdependent with each other, each relying on the next for holistic balance to be achieved.

The shape of the pentacle with one point upwards is roughly in the shape of the human body with arms and legs outstretched. With this in mind we are reminded of the holographic nature of reality, the microcosm/macrocosm: the idea that the very big is contained within the very small. In each of us exists an energetic map for the entire universe.

The Iron Pentacle takes full advantage of this symbolism providing a framework for grounding the conceptual energy into the human body. While focusing on the points in succession, the energy is generally felt within the body beginning with the point of Sex at the center of the forehead, Pride at the right foot, Self at the left hand, Power at the right hand, and finally Passion at the left foot. By running energy between these points we are able to bring the power of the Pentacle into our bodies in an attempt to free ourselves of blocks that we may possess that serve to hinder our growth.

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The pentacle is a way to begin to understand the universe in a personal way, as well as a means to understand ourselves, opening the gate to the Mystery and giving us access to the Star Goddess, the Primordial state of being. Like the iron in our blood, it is the foundation of our lives as well as our magick. As witches of the Feri Craft we are the holders of a sacred key which unlocks nothing less than our true potential, not only as witches but as fully realized human beings. With every breath we learn more about what that may be for each of us.

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About this capture
Talismanic Magick:
Learning the Language of Symbols through Modern Witchcraft
by Storm Faerywolf

I define talisman as any object that has been magickally charged with power in order to perform a certain function. It is a magickal symbol in physical form that can perhaps be carried or worn in order for its sphere of influence to be readily felt. Talismans have been used from since before the beginnings of recorded history when Paleolithic wo/man drew and painted images on cave walls and carve figures out of stone to represent the hunt, birth, death, and beyond.

The understanding and use of magickal symbols is an art form that is essential to the student of any magickal path. The manipulation of symbols constitutes a language that is understood by that part of our soul structure known as the fetch, as is described in the Three Souls model of the Feri tradition of witchcraft. It is this form of pre-verbal direct communication to a deeper layer of our soul(s) that is a critical aspect in learning to wield magickal power. When we are able to communicate with our fetch, then we are a step closer to actualizing our potential as complete human beings.

On one level, symbols can be seen as “store-houses” of power. A pentacle or five pointed star, for example, can remind one of the five element model, illustrating how the powers in question are interconnected and flow into each other in a progression. It can also conjure the image of the human body, with arms and legs outstretched, and so can remind us that these powers are within us as well as without. With this in mind, the pentacle then becomes a symbol for these qualities and so when I use it in ritual I can draw these powers from them as needed. The relationship that my psyche has with the symbols designates the power that they may hold.

Symbols are also gateways. We use symbols to transport our consciousness to another place, another time. When meditating on the great sword in the stone, Excalibur, we are whisked away to a land populated by chivalrous knights, ancient magicks, and fulfillment of destiny. The image of the sword lodged in the stone might then become a symbol for any of these things or more. Perhaps it can represent the goal that has been

just out of reach, the one thing that no one believes that you can do. Or perhaps it can be representative of claiming your power; seeing yourself hold aloft the sword can conjure a sense of completion, of wholeness, of victory.

Symbols that we encounter, like those found in dreams, are very personal indeed. Because symbols communicate through direct interaction with the most primal parts of our psyche, bypassing our conscious filter of rational and linear thought, they rarely translate exactly from person to person. My experience of dreaming of a wolf, for example, would probably be different from that of a stranger or even a close friend. To me the wolf represents the power of the solitary in relation to the community. They are noble creatures, and walkers between the worlds. To someone else they might represent gentleness, viciousness, nurturing, hierarchy, hunger, intelligence, or any number of qualities that wolves have been said to possess since the dawn of recorded history. The important thing to understand is that no one definition can ever hope to encapsulate the totality of the symbolic experience.

When choosing a symbol for a magickal working it is important to keep things simple. The more elaborate the symbol(s) the less likely that you will be able to concentrate on it/them with enough focus to direct the power. Additionally there will be a greater chance of success if the method towards manifestation of the desired result is left somewhat open. For example, were I to be performing a money spell I would probably find it more useful to focus on the symbol of a dollar sign (\$) than, lets say, an invocation written in any of the widely available magickal alphabets much used in the modern Craft (perhaps something written to the effect of "From my job, more money comes."). In the first example the symbol of the dollar sign is used as a gateway to power: I understand what a dollar sign means and I have a certain relationship to it, as it is a symbol in common use within our culture. By focusing my energy on it as the goal I can fill my thoughts with nothing else, nothing will be left to distract me. With my concentration being focused in this way I am completely immersed in the power of the symbol, allowing it to interact directly with my fetch, thus communicating my desire in such a way that magickal action can be taken out. I have also left the means to the goal open; my fetch knows that the money can come from just about anywhere and so the magick, like electricity, will take the path of least resistance.

With the second example I run the risk of overlooking other avenues towards manifestation: being given gifts of money, finding money, or even having it magickally appear in my bank account. There are times, however, when you will want to be more specific and so will set more parameters for the working of the spell. Perhaps your goal is specifically to get a raise from your current employer, in which case the second example above would prove to be a nice representation, or even perhaps a combination of the two. This is why it is important to be very clear on what it is that you want beforehand. The first and most important step in any magickal working is the definition of magickal intent.

The ritual manipulation of the chosen symbol(s) can be a contributing factor in its initial choosing. For example, if in the text of a particular spell a symbol is to be etched on a

candle (thus charging it with that particular aspect) then, again using our money spell above, the dollar sign would prove to be a good choice, as it is simple, small, and can be easily drawn. You can see how the 2nd example would prove to be more than problematic. If, however, you wanted to charge a particular object with power, such as jewelry or something that you could later carry with you, then you would want to choose a physical object that speaks to your fetch on some level. In the case of jewelry you might choose something that is made from a material that is in resonance with your goal. Gold has long been associated with prosperity, as has silver, for obvious reasons. Certain crystals, stones, and herbs have been attributed with such powers, throughout numerous cultures. By focusing your intent (your magickal goal) while gazing or (preferably) touching the physical object to be charged, you are “programming” the object with your desire. It can be this simple, if you are skilled at concentration and channeling energy, or it can be as elaborate as any ritual that you can come up with. Just remember that the more elements that you include you run a greater risk of becoming distracted. It is usually best to keep things simple. Magickally speaking less is more.

Another important thing to know is that every action performed in a ritual setting becomes a part of the ritual. The act of etching the symbol on the candle, the choosing of the object, burning of certain herbs, conscious breathing, chanting, visualization, etc. When writing your spell it is important to ask yourself how each action lends itself to the overall ritual and if it doesn't you may want to consider omitting it.

Once you have chosen your goal, your symbol(s), and your ritual, it is then time to set it all in motion. At this point you should already be familiar with basic energy techniques, having practiced grounding and basic meditation until you have achieved a certain level of proficiency. Spellwork can be effective without these basic skills, but usually only sporadically so. You would be wise to familiarize yourself with these basic precepts before continuing onward so as to increase your control of the power, and your chances of success.

Ground and center. Allow yourself to open-up to the Divine force all around you. Breathe it in. Holding your symbol (or a candle with your symbol etched on it, etc.) begin to breathe into the object, feeling the force of spirit moving into it along with your intent. Take some time to really feel this, as your feeling is the most important aspect of the spell. Feeling is the magickal conduit for the power to flow through. Make sure yours is clear.

At this point you may wish to chant, or sing, burn incense, light a candle, draw a picture, perform a dance or yoga posture, or read an affirmation or poem that pertains to your magickal desire, anything that will increase your feeling connection to the Divine, but only if it clearly lends itself to your goal. Trust your intuition in this matter.

During the ritual your aim will be to concentrate on your goal as a reality that has already occurred, while you are channeling energy into your symbol. Feel as if the symbol is merging with you, bringing with it the magickal goal. Open up to it and allow it

to interact with you. You may find that certain other feelings and images arise within your psyche, much like a meditation. If these feel appropriate to your goal, then simply allow them to dance and play within you. If they feel more like distractions then gently bring your attention back to your symbol, keeping your thoughts on your goal. For this reason other tools such as chanting are sometimes used in order to force the conscious mind to stay focused, but this is a matter of personal preference.

When you have finished, end your ritual in the normal way, whether this is a formal closing of your ritual circle, or simply saying a prayer of thanks and walking away.

You should feel free to allow yourself permission to use whatever symbols you feel drawn to. There is no harm in experimenting with different symbols in spellwork as long as your intent is pure. If you are not seeking to manipulate someone's free-will, or attempting to bolster your own ego, then only knowledge will be gained from such experimentation. With your heart as your guide, tempered by your logic, you can find your own way along this magickal path. The only tool you need is you.

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About this capture
The Iron Pentacle:
Understanding the Harmonics of Consciousness
by Storm Faerywolf

From sex to pride,
from pride to self,
from self to power,
from power to passion

from passion to sex,
the gate is formed.
By my will the gate is opened.
Blessed be.

considered to be a foundational exercise of the Feri, the Iron Pentacle has proven to be a powerful symbol of the inner-work that is stressed so strongly in our tradition. Usually taught to students at or near the beginning of their training in order to provide a symbolic container for the work to come, the pentacle quickly becomes a personal mandala for the student, an energetic map that can lend important clues as to where we are wasting our energy, and provide us opportunities to heal imbalances in our inner selves. It is a talisman of great power. Briefly, the points can be understood as follows:

The point of Sex conceptually represents the creative power of the Universe. It is both polarity and resonance within the current of Divine energy. It is that point of orgasm in which we open to the Universal dance and participate in its creation and in its destruction within each moment.

The point of Pride is our recognition of our own self-worth and the ability to live fully without reservation, allowing our true nature to shine outward while not giving in to the ego's temptation to compare ourselves to others. It is complete innocence, living fully and unabashedly in the moment.

Self represents our full knowledge of our own potential as well as our limitations along with the knowledge of who we are in relation to others and the Universe at large.

Power is the balanced outpouring of our whole being; the focused harmony of all five points in the pentacle which allows us greater access to our own deep potential. It is the projection of ourselves into the world that causes change, that makes magick. It is never manipulative, for true power exists in its own right and finds revelry in co-operative relationships with other beings and points of view.

Passion is our ability to be open to the fullest experience of feeling, whether that be of the highest bliss, or of the deepest depression. It is the true embodiment of ecstasy.

Taken individually, the points on our pentacle represent important aspects of our consciousness that are normally interpreted in a negative light from the standpoint of mainstream society. Even in those times when an energetic relationship to the conceptual point on the pentacle is one that is encouraged by the mainstream, we find the relationship is usually an unhealthy one. One needs only look to the prevalence of sexual imagery in modern advertising, and the unrealistic expectations that it encourages, for an example of this. Our negative relationships are formed and reinforced each time we compare our bodies to those we see in a magazine, each time we feel "selfish" for accepting a compliment or taking pride in our work, and each time

we automatically equate power with corruption.

By restructuring our relationships to these concepts we can begin to balance our world-view through the removal of the negative preconceptions already firmly in place within our psyches. This allows us deeper access to our authentic selves unhindered by cultural conditioning, a state poetically referred to in our tradition as “The Black Heart of Innocence”. ©2003 Storm Faerywolf

It is from this space, this magnificent state of being, that magick is made. Only when we are free from our irrational fears can we begin to truly live, and it is precisely this that the Gods call for us to do. In order to mediate real power into the world (the true function of any priest or priestess) we must first be made pure; we must come to terms with ourselves for exactly who and what we are, and in the face of this truth, begin to live it fully. Easier said than done.

Each point on the pentacle represents a particular wavelength of consciousness that, even when in isolation from the others, is an invaluable aid to the cleansing and development of the psyche. By connecting meditatively to each point, we can begin to discern how its conceptual power flows through us individually, giving us opportunities to notice how we are affected. When I experience the conceptual energy of Pride, for example, I am faced with the possibility of an unhindered boundless wave of self acceptance and love, an experience that, when taken in the greater context of everyday awareness, leaves me with the experiential understanding of how well I am or am not actualizing such acceptance within my own life. If I am living from my heart center, then I am validated in that experience. If I am not, then I am reminded of that center, and encouraged, by example, to allow my energies to flow freely, thus cultivating that sense of pride that I am connecting to.

When used early on in training, it is common to meditate on each point in succession, gaining speed with each pass until the conscious mind can no longer attach itself to any one particular concept, blurring them into one flow of power. From Sex, to Pride, to Self, to Power, to Passion, and back to Sex, the points themselves become energetic markers, like bands of color in the spectrum, that stand out in the midst of the greater force, and yet are a necessary part of that force, lending to the experience rather than distracting from it.

When taken together, the points on the Iron Pentacle create a kind of harmony, not unlike the voices in a choir, that is greater than the sum of its parts. The five conceptual points of our pentacle interlock to create a kind of “psychic gateway” that leads us deeper into the realms of Faery, and into our own power. When we have actualized each point within ourselves, and are able to maintain a simultaneous connection to each of them and their relationships to each other within our consciousness, then we have embarked upon the remarkable journey: We have made the decision to abandon those negative traits forced upon us by the larger society in favor of a healthy relationship to ourselves, and have taken the first real step towards claiming our Divine birthright: We have decided to become more fully human.

But the question must be posed: Why in a shamanic tradition must we focus on tools and tricks that are obviously centered around affecting the psychological well-being of the student? Why not simply have the student enter into therapy and leave the psyche to the psychologists and the witchcraft to the witches?

It would be unwise to think that the realms of the psychological, the spiritual, and the magickal do not, at the very least, intersect. Much of the training work utilized in many of the branches that teach Feri today bear a striking resemblance to deep therapeutic techniques. Breathing exercises, controlled relaxation, and guided introspection are all techniques that are utilized in both therapy and in modern witchcraft, so what, if anything, makes them different?

One difference is the deep spiritual connection of the community at large. In the presence of a teacher the Iron Pentacle becomes a connection point the student has to the greater Feri community, a symbol of how our diverse energies are interconnected and how they can flow together to form a unified working whole. Even if we each have a different understanding of the conceptual points, we have the work itself in common which leads us to a greater kinship with each other, as witches of the Feri clan. The fact that we each may have been taught differently on the subject merely reinforces the significance of the work to the individual; for the power to remain authentic it must, by definition, change from person to person to reflect the psychic make-up of the individual. When confronted with real power, real results occur. The Iron Pentacle, as a working tool, is a beginning point for understanding the Feri reality. For years practitioners of Feri have used these techniques, with much success, and have revised them to suit their individual needs as practicality demands. When I practice the Iron Pentacle I am filled with the knowledge that this is a path that other practitioners have embarked upon; other Feri have used these signposts in order to better understand their relationship to our Gods, the Universe, and themselves. When I practice, I am in good company.

Another major difference is in the very nature of the powers that we, as Feri, are dealing with. The Gods, Goddesses, Guardians, spirits, and powers that we are working with are real and not simply in a metaphorical sense as is seen in many modern traditions of the Craft. When I call upon the Gods they show up, providing me with perspectives that I was previously unaware of, or even leading me into situations where I have opportunity to claim and refine my power, my perceptual relationship to the universe.

In my opinion the exercises utilized in the Feri training are (for the right individual) much more powerful in effect than the standard therapeutic model. In addition to being a more direct way to deal with issues and complexes within the psyche, the magickal model enables the student to develop control of their relationship to their environment, and more importantly, provides an experiential understanding of how the world really works. Instead of just reinforcing the old paradigm of separateness, the magickal model does away with such nonsense and instills the understanding of interconnectedness as an experiential reality.

In light of all of this, the Iron Pentacle is, in one sense, a reminder of how that

interconnectedness works on a personal level, thus bringing that understanding out into the world at large.

For many modern witches the symbol of the pentagram with its five interlocking points has come to represent the interconnected forces of the five natural elemental principals of the Universe working in harmony. It is a reminder that these forces exist in relation to each other, each serving a unique purpose and yet are interdependent with each other, each relying on the next for holistic balance to be achieved.

The shape of the pentacle with one point upwards is roughly in the shape of the human body with arms and legs outstretched. With this in mind we are reminded of the holographic nature of reality, the microcosm/macrocosm: the idea that the very big is contained within the very small. In each of us exists an energetic map for the entire universe.

The Iron Pentacle takes full advantage of this symbolism providing a framework for grounding the conceptual energy into the human body. While focusing on the points in succession, the energy is generally felt within the body beginning with the point of Sex at the center of the forehead, Pride at the right foot, Self at the left hand, Power at the right hand, and finally Passion at the left foot. By running energy between these points we are able to bring the power of the Pentacle into our bodies in an attempt to free ourselves of blocks that we may possess that serve to hinder our growth.

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The pentacle is a way to begin to understand the universe in a personal way, as well as a means to understand ourselves, opening the gate to the Mystery and giving us access to the Star Goddess, the Primordial state of being. Like the iron in our blood, it is the foundation of our lives as well as our magick. As witches of the Feri Craft we are the holders of a sacred key which unlocks nothing less than our true potential, not only as witches but as fully realized human beings. With every breath we learn more about what that may be for each of us.

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About this capture
Currents in the Ocean:
Exploring the Fluid Nature of Divinity
by Storm Faerywolf

"All gods are one god, and all goddesses are one goddess, and there is one initiator."
-Dione Fortune

From the still and primal Darkness, floating in the realm of possibility emerges S/he who is the first emanation. From the Void S/he comes. A point of light that separates Being from the Cosmic Womb moves outward on the sheer joy of the manifest. Moving outward on the breath, blurring, taking form and taking shape, changing, merging, eternal. A myriad of color; a spectral force, moving through my body as I breathe and I know that I am not alone. Alive in my cells the Gods sing to me. I hear their tune and I answer with the pulsing of my heart. Moving inward on my breath, collapsing, changing, returning. A single point of light in the Universe, calling forth the Unity of all things.

When I first began to seriously study the Craft I was troubled by certain modalities of thought that sought to explain the Universe in terms of a structured hierarchy, usually one that supported whatever power structures were in place within the organizational body of that particular religious tradition. My intuitive sense, even at that tender and awkward age, was that reality was in a constant state of flux, always changing, always yearning to create new forms. I believed then as I do now: that all of Creation strives to express itself in new and interesting ways.

I remember my thoughts on gods and goddesses at the time, how inconceivable it was that these beings could somehow be separate from each other, if indeed we were all part of one being; one cosmic being experiencing itself through ourselves. My intuition called me to explore the idea of an ultimate Divinity, a Divine Source from which all else proceeded. I remember no book that I read on the Craft at that time speaking of such a concept, preferring to explain things in terms of interactions between the Goddess and the God, (explained as being separate powers) the mythological Lord and Lady reigning supreme from their celestial throne. When asked about a conceptual power behind these two beings, perhaps even a unifying force, I would be met with wide-eyed astonishment, or more usually, simply arrogant superiority. To focus on a singular Divine power or source was monotheism, I was told, and had no place in a polytheistic religion such as witchcraft.

Many a religious tradition has fallen prey to this trap of fixation, this idea that the Divine is somehow limited to certain qualities, aspects, faces, political affiliations, etc. By supposing that one has the only viable connection to Divinity (and that all others are therefore invalid) dangerously invokes a religious fanaticism that, by its nature of

serving the ego and reinforcing whatever power structures are already in place, encourages the suppression of differing points of view, the destruction of indigenous peoples (who's traditional lifestyles are invariably in conflict with big business and the ideals of a religious structured hierarchy) and, by extension, the squandering of the earth's natural resources. It is a mindset that we are all far too familiar with.

One of the distinguishing marks of the Feri tradition for me has been in the recognition of the ambiguous nature of the Universe. Far from being a system that seeks to impose limits and definitions onto experiential realities, Feri seems to revel in the blurring of boundaries, taking sheer pleasure in the paradoxical, the anomalous, the Weird. The unfathomable power of chaos is at its very core, that primal churning of energy that is the beginning point for everything known, and unknown. The Star Goddess moves outward from Herself, taking several forms, blurring one into the next, taking on new aspects, becoming more focused, yet retaining the essential quality of what has gone before.

All beings flow back into the ultimate source of all things. This implies that the underlying nature is a unified one, however this doesn't mean that any being will be just as useful for a particular purpose as any other. All goddesses are one Goddess, but this doesn't mean that I would find it useful to invoke Kali for a love spell, or Aphrodite for the destruction of an oppressive pattern. We find different points of focus along the spectrum that are aligned to different energies. We "tune into" varying frequencies in the waves of Divinity at different times, as we deem appropriate. I can understand mentally that the Blue God is, in one sense, a manifestation of the Star Goddess, but I also recognize that they feel quite different, and because of this possess different powers.

Recently I had a dream. In this vision I was shown a window into the nature of the Star Goddess, specifically Her relationship to other Deities of the Feri tradition, and by extension to the Universe at large.

In the dreamtime I see a light. The light from a black candle breaking across the darkness of the room, as my teacher and myself sit, breathing in a rhythm, calling down the trance upon ourselves. We breathe, and the white flame becomes surrounded by a rainbow band, a prismatic nimbus that hints at the hidden powers within the light. I inhale, and the power moves outward from that light, becoming now something different; moving into a new form. Where there was one power, there are now two: Nimue and Dian y Glas, birthed from the white fire womb of the Cosmic Mother. It continues, riding on the waves of my breath, these two powers move outward still, changing from these child-like beings and maturing into the Great Mother, and the Harvest Lord, then finally into the Crone, and the Winter King. A point of stillness at the end of my breath, and then it returns on my exhale, these powers collapsing back into that from which they came, flowing backward into that point of light which contains them all: the white fire of the Star Goddess, flickering softly in the darkness of the Void.

I awoke with a sense of purpose, determined to actualize what I had seen. I began to perform the exercise from my dream, slowly at first, following the pattern as laid out in

my vision. It wasn't long, however, before the flow of power began to take on a life of its own, emerging into new configurations, new patterns that challenged the seemingly structured order that was present in the dream. I began to experience the interactions of specific Deities I had not associated with each other before. The Blue God flowing into the Winter King, forming a specific energetic vibration, a frequency that, in one sense, represented the revelation of a Deity previously unknown to me; a hybrid, a seeming paradox if I were to retain the rigid thinking that would force them to remain separate. I began to contemplate this being, allowing Him to show me his secrets, feeling His flow of power, listening to His whispers. Then I promptly forgot all about it.

That is until quite recently.

Working extensively with the Star Goddess as of late, I found myself bathed in Her fire. Resting in my heart in the form of an idol I created for Her, she pulsed with white flame as elemental fire raged into my body from the four directions. I awoke with a fever, drifting in and out of consciousness but always returning to the idol in my chest and the fire in my body. I felt as if my blocks to power were being, quite literally, burned away, leaving me pure and open. My fever grew and for a short time I was no longer able to make the distinction between this world and the next, being comforted by the singing of unseen children, and the constancy of my vision. Then the being came.

He emerged from the darkness to rest before my closed eyes. He was beautiful, appearing as if in his early twenties, triangular features, pale skin, jet black hair. His eyes were the blue of the star-lit sky infused with the still cool light of morning. He looked into me and aroused my desire for Him. He had a playful wickedness to Him, a sense of almost punkish sensuality that both allured and frightened. I wanted Him and found myself relaxing into Him. After a brief silence He told me that, now in my fever, I could come with Him if I chose to; I could leave my physical body and wander the Outer Darkness with Him as my shining guide. There was a definite sense of temptation, as if He, the Pied Piper of my dreamtime, were attempting to seduce me into choosing my own death and for a time I was indeed tempted. To look upon His face was to be filled with desire for Him. But to stand in His presence was also to be reminded of the importance of this reality, a sharpness that cut to the heart of the matter at hand. I looked into His eyes and gave Him my answer, that there was still more that I wanted to do here and thank you anyway.

He responded by opening his cloak (Why had I not noticed it before?) made entirely from feathers. He had no body, but this was of no concern to me, as the focus of the vision was on the feathers: iridescent black but interspersed with those of a peacock, revealing a secret into the being's identity. He danced. In circles He danced, whirling like a dervish silently off into the Outer Dark. Then he was gone.

By the next day my fever had broken and I was left to ponder my encounter with the nameless being. It was obvious to me that I had encountered, in vision, a Deity who had only previously been hinted at by the dream exercise; a blend of energies that produced a focal point where two different currents of power could flow into each other.

This being, this amalgamation is, quite literally, the offspring, the Divine Child of Dian y Glas and the Winter King, merged together in Holy Bliss. The implications of this realization, especially for me as a gay man, were tremendous. No longer would I be able to impose onto the realm of spirit the limitations of the physical. Sex, gender, reproduction; we have definite ideas as to what these terms mean for the human animal. But moving into the areas of the spiritual these ideas reflect different, more core truths. No longer limited by the density of the manifest we are left to contemplate their energetic essence and begin to understand these forces as mutable, flowing into each other, dancing together, making new forms, expressing to their fullest the possibilities of the erotic. To do so is to begin to touch the ecstatic.

In my body I understand the fluid nature of the Gods and so I need no one else to validate, or categorize my experiences for me. In communion with the Divine I require no outside authority. I stand as a Sacred Gateway for spirit to flow into the world, however strange it may seem at times. With this experience comes the realization that we are all such a gateway, just waiting to be open and allow the Divine, and our true selves, to flow into the world. In this psychedelic realm we know that what we dream is real, and that in this sea of energy we call the Universe, we are all just swirls, temporary patterns that arise for a time and then are gone, returning to that from which we came. A current flows here under the waves, seemingly going against the tide, challenging what is known, revealing new possibilities. In this ocean of experience we swim, feeling our way through to the depths of our own being, and beyond. In this state we can hold on to nothing, our judgments and egos would just weight us down, and so we choose the only other path: to be open, and to allow ourselves to be led by the current of the Divine into bliss. To do this is to do nothing less than to choose our own liberation.

An expanded version of this article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #3.

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About this capture

Do You Believe in Magick?
Recovering What Was Lost in Modern Witchcraft
by Storm Faerywolf

"...any child worth their weight in Fairy Dust will tell you that the power of pretending is a formidable one."

"To disbelieve in witchcraft is the greatest of all heresies." -Malleus Malificarum

When first confronted with the reality that witches still exist, one may be expected to entertain images of women gathered around a cauldron in the cloak of night, preparing certain potions and elixirs of great power in the hopes of affecting the world of men. One might recall the medieval accusation, now a popular icon associated with the Craft, of a witch dressed in black, silhouetted against the backdrop of the full moon as she flies across atop her broomstick to attend, presumably, her secret rites. Folk beliefs hold that witches possess great power and are able to draw on that power to both hex and to heal as they see fit. To bless and to curse is the territory of the witch and, at least in popular literature, she is more than willing to explore its recesses and to cultivate the power that she finds there.

After the Inquisition, when witchcraft and other "alternative" spiritualities and practices went underground or were lost, the belief in magick continued. In the late 1800's, the emergence of several magical lodges dedicated to various forms of ceremonial magick began to propel the idea of magick into the public light. Magick, defined by Dion Fortune as being "the art of changing consciousness at will" was now no longer to be considered "supernatural" (outside of the laws of nature) but as a logical and deep spiritual relationship to nature itself. When the popular branch of witchcraft known as Wicca began to gain foothold in the public's awareness, the idea of magick as a fantastic force of mythological proportions began to wane. Magick, it was now explained, occurred in the most mundane and seemingly normal ways. There were no miracles, only the planting of psychological seeds that would hopefully grow and bear the fruit of spiritual fulfillment and emotional balance. Gone were the days of flying ointments and enchanted doorways leading into other worlds. Gods and Goddesses, once the great and mighty beings of honor and dedication, were now seen as being mere archetypes within our collective psyche; tools to be utilized for emotional growth or personal gain. Now "real" magick was as harmless as church on Sunday, and as close as your therapist's couch.

When reading many of the introductory books on the Craft that are available on the market today, it becomes apparent that very few practitioners believe magick to be anything more than an offshoot of Jungian psychological principals. Deities, animal spirits, fae beings. All are seen as being nothing more than fanciful (if helpful) splinters of our own individual consciousness that are attempting to communicate to us directly through the modality of the symbolic. The difference to the ancient model is a profound one: beings of power--once seen as living and conscious entities in their own right--were

now reduced to little more than whimsical imaginings in a role subservient to the ego. Magick, it seemed, had been stripped of its power. But beneath all of the "accepted" forms and scholarly works, something different-something older-began to stir.

While many traditions of modern witchcraft have degenerated into little more than self-help groups with an occult veneer, there are still those whose practices and beliefs cannot be defined within the confines of the psychological model. Thousands of years of tales describing amazing events (not to mention the first-hand experiences of modern practitioners) have been the fodder necessary for continued belief in magickal power. Modern practitioners of the magickal arts maintain that the ordinary reality that we are generally accustomed to in our everyday lives does not exist in solitude. Just as the ancient shamen and tribal healers believed in other worlds that intersect our own, the modern witch builds and maintains a relationship with such worlds, as well as the inhabitants that reside there. In our practice the Gods have been restored to their places of power, and are honored once more.

The gathering of information through unconventional means is a prime example of how magick flies in the face of psychological attempts to define it. Take, for example, the religio-magickal rituals of the ancients. Feats of miraculous healing were not uncommon to the ancient practitioner. Tribal shamen would often consult a spirit or another otherworldly being in order to obtain healing for that which could not normally be healed. By traveling into the realm of the power being, spirit, or ally, the shaman would be able to bring back information that would be relevant to the tribe, and only then would be able to perform the healing rites. Whether this information constituted instruction on the use of certain herbs, particular magickal songs and incantations, or the location of sources of food or water, the shaman would have gathered information that s/he was previously unaware of, thus adding to the body of lore necessary to the survival of the tribe. Had these beings been merely offshoots of the shaman's own individual personality then the information obtained would have had to first been within the memory of the practitioner and would therefore be limited. Only by entering into a relationship with a conscious being with its own thoughts and ability to communicate could the shaman learn what was necessary for survival. These beings were understood as being real, and were treated accordingly.

It should be stated that a belief in the autonomous existence of Deities and various otherworldly beings does not automatically invalidate their psychological importance to the human practitioner. Gods are perfectly capable of being at once both archetype and living entity-taking delight in the seeming paradox that only exists within the limitations of human consciousness. In the magickal model of the universe we are all part of one boundless being, and as such are able to "tune-in" to certain "frequencies" (i.e. Gods, spirits, allies, etc.) allowing their particular energies to become more aligned with our own, thus facilitating open communication between the two. With this belief system in place we do not see the powers in question as being outside ourselves as we see that nothing is outside ourselves. This is at once both a subtle and profound shift from the standard psychological model, which sees all things as being separate and therefore isolated from each other.

The philosophies of what has come to be called Transpersonal Psychology are perhaps the most successful attempt at explaining these fundamental spiritual ideas within the limitations of mainstream acceptance. But even here the ideas expressed fall short of embracing that which has been known to witches and shamen for centuries: that the universe, far from being the lifeless droning machine as described by Cartesian physics, is in fact alive, conscious, and aware of our existence.

If magick is indeed "the art of changing consciousness at will" then why limit ourselves? A universe that is comprised of living, aware, conscious energy would seem to be the very best place to perform miracles, if only one knew the right "language". Energy can be moved, channeled, coaxed to flow in certain ways by as simply as focusing your awareness on it. Perhaps the consciousness that comprises a wall can be coaxed to become immaterial, allowing one to pass easily through. Such things have often been said of a number of Yogi masters from the Far East for quite some time. Perhaps if one only knew how to energetically relate to the wall it would allow passage unhampered. Is it possible that the guru or holyperson, having prepared themselves with whatever their particular custom demands, enters into a state of hyper-communication with an available energetic consciousness and is therefore able to wield it to his/her will? Defying gravity, moving objects, teleportation-all could perhaps be achieved by altering not only our own consciousness at will, but that of the environment as well. The person we are healing, the God we're invoking, the candle we are charging, the stone we are blessing, the villain we are cursing-there is a link between us and them, a conscious link that can be moved, tugged at, related to. Our awareness reaches out to theirs and in the meeting magick is made.

When I am open to the possibility of the fantastic, the mystical, the fabulous, I am in a better position to experience it. When I accept the idea that spirit can communicate to me directly, I see signs. In learning to read and understand those signs, I am living my life in a magickal way.

I believe in magick. I am a witch.

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About this capture

Do You Believe in Magick?

Recovering What Was Lost in Modern Witchcraft

by Storm Faerywolf

"...any child worth their weight in Fairy Dust will tell you that the power of pretending is a formidable one."

"To disbelieve in witchcraft is the greatest of all heresies." -Malleus Malificarum

When first confronted with the reality that witches still exist, one may be expected to entertain images of women gathered around a cauldron in the cloak of night, preparing certain potions and elixirs of great power in the hopes of affecting the world of men. One might recall the medieval accusation, now a popular icon associated with the Craft, of a witch dressed in black, silhouetted against the backdrop of the full moon as she flies across atop her broomstick to attend, presumably, her secret rites. Folk beliefs hold that witches possess great power and are able to draw on that power to both hex and to heal as they see fit. To bless and to curse is the territory of the witch and, at least in popular literature, she is more than willing to explore its recesses and to cultivate the power that she finds there.

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About this capture
Invoking a Hero
Modern Myth as Magickal Egregore
by Storm Faerywolf

"The only way to deny death, then, is to live each day to its absolute fullest---- by constantly striving to carve an immortal legend which will serve as your eternal legacy."

-Diana, from JLA: Heaven's Ladder

On Tuesday, Sept. 11, when the shocking events in New York and Washington were first unfolding, I strongly felt that what we needed was a hero.

I suppose that I felt a childish need to cling to the comforting idea that someone was going to come and make it all better. Then I thought that it should be possible to magickally create that hero: a thought-form, or egregor, that could act as a sort of guiding spirit for our country, and the world at large; One that could act with the precise fierceness of a warrior, but from a space of compassion. I thought that if I could use symbols that our culture had already produced and bonded with, then it would have even more power and be easier to "spread" the energies into the world-at-large.

In magick, symbols are powerful things. If principles and powers can be brought together under the symbol of a personifying force, then that symbol becomes a "focal-point" of psychic energy and can then take on a life of it's own. We "feed" the image with our power, and our prayers, and it in turn grows strong, enough perhaps to accomplish what may seem to some an impossible task.

In the days that would follow the attack, the people of this country would come together under a symbol that seemed to reappear out of nowhere. Suddenly omnipresent, the American flag seemed to sooth some peoples fears, and remind us that no matter

where in our country the attacks were made, we were all together in this; we were all Americans. We flew one at work. I wore one when I went outside in public. Under this banner, the people were united once more.

In the realm of the symbolic, the flag holds a great deal of power. It has been said that it is perhaps the only symbol that is common to each and every one of us in this nation of diverse peoples and cultures. Even if we don't agree with everything that the government represented by it engages in, it reminds us of those principles that the flag is supposed to stand for, and in this way unites us with the very serious purpose of creating them in truth. I can disagree with my government, even hate it at times, but I love my country. I love what it is supposed to represent; what it aspires to. Right now the flag, to me, is a symbol of that aspiration. It reminds me of what we are supposed to reach for.

There are certain limitations to the flag, however. It is particularly limiting in terms of national boundaries, which can prove to be a crippling problem when what is called for is an international response. Some might argue that the flag stands for the principles of freedom and justice, but how many times have we seen it used as an agent of war and arrogance? The flag is many things, to many people. Many conflicting powers and associations are woven into its Stars and Stripes. But behind the symbols and policies lies the philosophy, which must always be the foundation of a free people. The idea of freedom and justice for all remains our guiding star. Again we are called upon to make the dream a reality.

Even if we do not feel touched by the negative associations that can accompany the flag, it lacks a "personality" that I feel is necessary when dealing with the formation of an egregor. Because of this lack of focus, the solitary flag didn't feel like an adequate symbol to 'contain' the essence of the thought-form. I felt that what was needed was an intelligent force... one that could make decisions based on changing information and events... events that I myself would not be privy to. And also a force that would be guided by those principles that perhaps I can aspire to, but do not always attain. I have human failings, and so I cannot claim to know what specific actions to take in order to achieve the best outcome for other than myself. In this I was appealing to a higher power. What was needed was a personification of those guiding principles... an archetype from which to draw from... a myth from which to begin.

Working from the standpoint of modern pagan witchcraft, I am inclined to think in terms of the Goddess. If ever Her presence were needed it is in those times that are touched by war. Knowing how potent common symbols are when applied to an entire culture, I was not surprised to hear it suggested that I consider working with the Goddess of Liberty, Her devotional image being that of the statue that we all know so well. I would later do exactly that, in conjunction with my main working.

An important thing to consider when choosing a symbol for magickal working, is your "inspiration level". Symbols work best when they speak to the fetch; to those deepest parts of our selves. Many times this is a result of events and images that we were

exposed to as children. Myths and other inspirational liturgies were passed down in traditional cultures by storytelling and ritual enactment, thus allowing their collective momentum to grow with each passing generation, with each new telling. Lacking specific avenues for the transmission of spiritual instruction in modern society, magick, as it always does, took the path of least resistance. The powers of myth have endured in our society, flourishing in the stories that inspire and delight us. Books, television, movies... newer methods of transmitting symbolic power to the masses, and none the worse for wear.

I had been inspired by the power of my chosen symbol long, long ago. In use for years, seen by millions, recognized anywhere in the country, admired by me since childhood. She (because only a female could be called on to successfully battle the forces of the patriarchy) has stood for truth, for compassion, for justice, for everything that America hopes to strive for, even if it doesn't always succeed. She has been a consistent presence in our culture since Her first appearance in WWII. Her image can be seen on glasses, mugs, t-shirts, posters, computer games, television shows, magazines, books, toys, and everything else you can possibly imagine. Seen by little girls (and boys) for over sixty years, Her essence growing with every new admirer, She has stood for the ways of the Goddess since the beginning. She is action without ego... strength married to compassion... Fierceness married to healing... She is a warrior, but also a scholar, healer, priestess.

She is the Great American Goddess. She's even dressed in our flag.

She is Diana, Princess of Themyscira, Ambassador of Paradise, Goddess of Truth, Avatar of Olympus, Emissary of the Glory of Gaea, better known to the world as Wonder Woman.

"Diana holds the Fenris-Wolf" ©2001-2002 Storm Faerywolf

Perhaps some will find the idea odd, strange, or even ridiculous that I would suggest spiritually connecting to a comic-book character, but She called to me to perform this work. A month prior to these workings I was inspired to write of Her as a modern Goddess. I felt Her as a very real Goddess power communicating from the world beyond, clothed in a symbol created by our own modern culture. The real beauty is that I didn't have to create anything... the power was already there in the form of archetype and modern myth. I just had to tap-into it.

It was She who perhaps first inspired me in my childhood to seek out the Old Gods... ("Great Hera, give me strength!") As a child my admiration for Her was strong, perhaps due to Her being representative of a type of strength and power that is not aligned to traditional male-dominance, and thus in short supply. Hers was the power of love and the magic of compassion... Those were powerful and inspiring qualities for a little queer boy back in the early 1970's. In recent times I have re-connected more deeply with Her, although these workings that I have performed in connection with this issue are the first that I have done. I have always seen Her as a modern version of the ancient Roman

huntress/moon-goddess Diana, although tailored into Her modern guise.

I lit candles around an image of Her and asked that Her spirit and Her principles flow over our country and into the heads and hearts of our leaders, and those beyond our shores. Let all that bear Her likeness be conduits for Her power, like fountains gushing forth those principles that She represents. Let all who see Her image be touched by Her power. I am asking Her to bring tolerance and understanding to those who would otherwise wage violence on those who's ways are different and are of darker skin. I am asking Her to bind events and leaders in her lasso of truth, that none may be deceived into wrongdoing. I am asking her to use Her bracelets to deflect further attacks that may be on the horizon, and render them harmless. I am asking Her to use Her powers to teach us about the very thing that She was sent to teach Man's World in the very beginning: how to live with one another in peace.

Modern Day Triple Fates: Wonder Woman watches over the world 9/18/01

With the swiftness of Mercury, the strength of Hercules, the wisdom of Athena, and the beauty of Aphrodite, may She come to protect and inspire us all. This is what I pray for these days.

It's a pretty lofty goal but then magick is a pretty lofty thing, isn't it?

To some it might sound absurd... but it really means something to me. Those principles mean something to me.

America means something to me.

For the Glory of Gaea,

This article also appeared in Witch Eye: A Zine of Feri Uprising #6

[Click here](#) for the "Wonder Woman" television theme in Windows WAV format.

[Click here](#) for a thought provoking article by Bishop John Shelby Spong.

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About this capture

Beyond Toil and Trouble:

On the ethics and practice of hexing in modern Witchcraft

By Storm Faerywolf

"Eight words the Wiccan Rede fulfill,

'An it harm none, do what thou wilt." -From The Wiccan Rede

"And thou shalt be the first of witches known;

And thou shalt be the first of all i' the world;

And thou shalt teach the art of poisoning..." -Charles G. Leland, Aradia, or the
Gospel of the Witches

"But you must not change one thing, one pebble, one grain of sand, until you know what
good and evil will follow on the act. The world is in balance, in Equilibrium. A Wizard's
power of changing and of summoning can shake the balance of the world. It is
dangerous, that power. It is most perilous. It must follow knowledge, and serve need, To
light a candle is to cast a shadow . . ." -The Master Hand 1

One by one, the members of our group begin to feel it: A shift is coming and we are
concerned. We gather together and hear the stories of governmental corruption... of the
people's will being perverted and silenced... of the rich and the mighty and how they
meet in secret to determine our fates. We are told of beatings, of torture... We hear of
plans to, once again, desecrate the body and breast of the Mother to drill for ever more
poison. The very trees are weeping; their beansidhe-like wails have not fallen on deaf
ears. We are enraged. Can no one stop them? We feel powerless, at first. We know
what we must do next, and so we prepare. One by one, we fall silent into the trance...

I feel a stirring within me... The Old Gods making themselves known... I see the power
flow out of me like a wave... a pulsing thing, alive and purposeful. It is sharp, precise,
sober. Where before I was in a place of chaos, now I am calm. My Deep Self is calling
to me, pouring through me, and I know that this is a moment of true power. It guides me
to gather the items: a quill and some red ink (the blood of the earth), some camphor
(sacred to Her mysteries), and for each of us a rotten egg (a vessel of life turned to
decay). Inhaling the strong odor of the camphor smoke, we inscribe the sigils on each

egg, breathing and chanting over them with great caution, imbibing them with power. We travel, eggs and offerings in tow, to stand at the crossroads near my home and fixing our gaze on the moon, we invoke:

Hecate! Hecate! Hecate!
Mother of the howling dogs,
Dreaded Queen of the Night,
Hecate Triformus of the Triple Will,
Descend now from the shining moon,
Arise now from the lonely seas,
Emerge now from the darkened earth,
To stand against those who, without honor,
Murder the soul of the earth and Her children.

An offering of food is placed upon the ground, and I am guided to walk to the nearby creek. The sounds of the water calling me closer, I feel the magick of the stream below. It is moving power, greater than my own. Standing on the bridge, I call:

Hecate! Hecate! Hecate!
You who cut the lines of fate,
This vessel of life, now filled with death,
Is open to your terrible presence.
In my hand I now hold,
The dreaded power of Hecate!
Into the face of opposing power,
I cast my dart with terrible purpose:
Bring ruin to the house of evil!

By our Will, the power flows into these eggs, and now --into the stream below-- we throw our spell... the eggs crash into the moving waters... I feel the power flowing in ways I had not felt before... There could be people around watching and listening but I don't care... I feel the Dark Power guiding me. The words flow out and over my lips...

Hecate! Hecate! Hecate!
Those you touch are changed forever,
Your song is the terror that leads to bliss,
We sing it now unto the river,
That it may flow into our enemy's house,
to hold up mirrors to their faces,
That they know the horror of what they do,
And with this knowledge may they be turned,
Away from evil and so be blessed.

We each spit over the bridge and begin to wail and chant, rocking and swaying in the moonlight... our power has flown from us in the name of justice. Our desperate prayer has been made. We know that some will not condone what we have done, and that

others will rejoice in it. On this night, we learn a lesson. We are touched by Hecate, and are changed forever. Now we wait to see how it unfolds, for magick this deep is seldom predictable. With baited breath, we watch the world. For now, we are too tired to do anything else. It is a fatigue that will last into the months that come... 2

Amongst the varied practitioners of the magickal arts, there is perhaps no area of discussion that possesses quite the same charge of emotional conviction, as does the subject of cursing. Many modern pagans are opposed to the use of a hex under any circumstances, usually citing the Wiccan Rede or the Threefold Law as "proof" that "real" witches never touch the stuff. Others who are perhaps more at home in the shadows of morality seem to take delight in the art of the curse, proceeding then to cast them at each other as casually as children throwing stones. Still others, who do not accept many additions that the more "New Age"³ versions of Wicca have brought into the larger Craft family, feel that at rare times the act of hexing is a sacred duty. Used in these instances to defeat evil, to restore the balance, or to turn the tides of fate in favor of the oppressed, these practitioners see themselves acting as human agents for the Divine here on earth.

As a witch of this latter variety, I might feel compelled to bind someone whom I know is causing harm. The highest good always my ideal, I might even hex a rapist, a murderer, or another violent offender, that they be tripped-up by their own wrongdoings. Perhaps they are to fall and suffer a mild injury and be helpless until the police come. Perhaps they are plagued by headaches or nightmares that render them useless until they "change their ways", and turn themselves into the authorities.

But what when those authorities are the very ones to blame for intimidation, oppression, violence, or worse? History has shown that cursing has been widely used by disempowered groups as a means to battle their oppressors. In Leland's *Aradia*, we learn how the witches' avatar comes to earth specifically in order to teach the poor and the oppressed how to poison and torment their wealthy masters.⁴ Witchcraft is clearly described as being a religion of the oppressed, and as such draws heavily on its' ability to both bless and to blight.

It is this point that demonstrates our relationship to many diasporic religious traditions. It has long been recognized that magick is an effective tool for the oppressed. It is able to gather together minds and intentions to focus them towards a common purpose. When that purpose is survival then it is indeed a powerful force and not one that should be denied. The art of cursing was an important part of the survival of the black slaves in North America, giving them the needed hope that their oppressors would fall, and they would one day be free. In self-defense or in defense of others, cursing can be the last final hope of the abused and powerless. Only those whose lives have not presented them with an understanding of such hardships could possibly disparage hexing without regard to circumstance.

One realm in which the curse is sometimes used is the political. When we see the government deny the basic rights of its people, when ancient environments are threatened with extinction, when the weak and the innocent are being displaced and beaten, we know then that we must act. Witches who believe in real magick cannot just sit idly by and allow evil to remain unchallenged. However, it is a tricky thing to influence events on such a large scale. With individuals, the target is more refined, more precise. When dealing with movements, groups, or ideologies, then the path becomes less and less certain. We must be all the more diligent in our efforts to manifest the highest good for everyone, not just ourselves. It is a trick of the well-trained witch to discern between the personal will, and that of Deep Self. If we are to believe in our own powers then we have a certain responsibility to use them wisely. Of course, this is easier said than done.

There are other times when it is tempting to throw a curse. Perhaps your boss is treating you badly, or a lover is cheating on you. Someone could be slandering your name, stealing from you, or otherwise causing you harm. It is easy to allow emotions to cloud judgement, even in the best of circumstances. When anger is involved, it almost certainly does.

But hexing is not something to be used for every problem or annoyance that may come our way. Even in severe circumstances, we must ask ourselves what good we are trying to manifest through our actions, and just how we think a hex is going to achieve that. Perhaps there are other, more effective ways of dealing with the problem, magickally or not. Often, as in the case of revenge, we find that a hexing usually does little or nothing to solve any real problems. The thief may fall ill, but does that get your radio back? A curse might even feel satisfying in the short-term, but often we are left with a larger mess than what we started with. This is one of the main reasons why true curses are rare things indeed.

There are, however, times when even after much thought and preparation, a curse is still warranted. Regardless of our reasons for deciding to perform the hex, it is in these times that we must be prepared to look deep within ourselves to determine the source of our motivations, lest we be tangled up in them like flies in the proverbial web of self-deception. If we are still in the throngs of anger and emotion, we run the risk of being swept up by them, distorting our perceptions and losing our perspective. For a practitioner of magick this can prove to be dangerous. In sorcery, perception is everything.

The power that we draw upon for a curse (as for anything else) must first flow through ourselves, and so we should first make certain that we are clear of any psychic debris that it may encounter along the way. For any practitioner that has been involved with the "Inner Work" of a spiritual discipline this comes as no surprise. We all have complexes, issues, and unresolved knots of energy that can prove to be the undoing of any spell that we may perform.

Even the simplest of spells can twist into something unexpected when it encounters an unknown demon, conflict, or issue. Our own fears and inadequacies may play a role in

how power is channeled into the world. When working baneful magick there is no room for error. I have heard it said that there is a price to pay when performing a curse, and indeed, I have found this to be true. As a result of the political workings referenced in the beginning of this article I found myself in a state of psychic fatigue which lasted for months. Calling upon destructive forces, even when it is justified to do so, takes its toll on the human practitioner.⁵ In addition, to throw a curse I must be prepared to submit to its conditions. I must be free of any wrong doing, especially of the sort that I am opposing, or else I will find that I am cursed as well.⁶

It is my understanding that the Great Work of the Craft (and I believe of any true priest/esshood as well) is involved primarily with cultivating a deepened awareness of the Self, in order to allow one to become a vessel for Divine presence. A great deal of this, for me, has been in the observation and re-evaluation of the ego and its' place within the community of my Self. One of the things that I have learned, in my time studying the Craft, is that the ego is a tricky thing. It can lull you into thinking that you are doing something good, or righteous, while in reality you are just spreading more shit around. Take, for example, the religious right. In whatever they are doing, be it lobbying to remove human rights protections, picketing the funerals of gays & lesbians, or turning a blind eye to the violence caused by their views, they believe that they are the agents of righteousness. It is the absolute conviction that they are doing 'God's work' that causes them to be unaware that they are the cause of so much pain and suffering.

This is why righteousness is a dangerous state for the seeker of knowledge to be in. It can justify anything if the ego is aligned towards it. It can trap the seeker in a delirium of self-appreciating rationalization, preventing growth or true thought, leaving them blind to their actions and their results. When we are filled with righteous anger it is often too easy to allow it to flow into purely destructive forms such as tyranny and domination. With the conviction of righteousness coursing through our veins, we are too often inclined to use excessive force, especially if our reasons are justified. We must make certain that we are working responsibly or else we are not worthy of the powers and pleasures our Craft affords us. A spiritual system that intends to foster personal awareness and responsibility must certainly address this issue.

In the Feri tradition we have certain tools that, when worked with, provide the checks and balances that we need in order to stay sane on the magickal path. The Iron and Pearl Pentacles are used to harmonize the practitioner's energy-body and provide a psychic foundation for the shamanic work that is to follow. Alignment with the Three Souls is another valuable practice that enables us to remain in a dynamically balanced relationship with the Divine force. Taking a moment to bathe in the light of Deep Self can cleanse one of unproductive and even dangerous energies that arise when dealing with severe emotion. Whether we are in deep despair or consumed in the fires of rage, we rely on these tools to help keep us focused on what is most important, so that when the tidal wave comes we are not swept away by it. Moving now in balance, we can step aside at will and allow our curse, if we still deem it necessary, to flow unimpeded and onto its target.

With this, as with anything we do, there are no easy answers. The best that we can do is to take responsibility for our actions regardless of their results. In the realm of the magickal, this includes the multitude of unforeseen effects that stem from what we do. When we invoke, we change the world. It is up to each of us to make sure that those changes are for the better.

1. LeGuin, Ursula K. A Wizard of Earthsea. Parnassus, 1968.
2. From a series of political workings that my group began in the latter months of 2000.
3. I am using this term to refer to the more recent emergence of modern witches who insist that certain ideas (such as the Threefold Law of Return postulated in Gardnerian Wicca) are in fact universal laws binding all witches. Especially when applied to the Wiccan Rede and the insistence that no "real" witch would ever cause harm however small, under any circumstance. This leads to a condition of imbalance (not so) lovingly referred to by other practitioners as "fluffy bunny-ism". This is in direct contrast to true Wicca (including the Gardnerian tradition) which embraces both the light and the dark aspects of humanity and nature.
4. Leland, Charles G. Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches. 1899. Reprint, Blaine, Washington: Phoenix Publishing 1996.
5. Valiente, Doreen. An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present. Pg. 155. 1973. Reprint, Custer, Washington: Phoenix Publishing, 1986.
6. Cholla. "Who Cannot Hex, Cannot Heal" from Witch Eye #2. 2000.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #5.

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About this capture
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They are lovers. Entwined. Eternal.
Call them Brothers or Sisters, Fathers or Mothers, Friends or Lovers... they are just words. It is Their love that matters.

Call Them Heaven and Earth and we can see Them: The Earth who looks upon the face of Heaven and beholds the face of His beloved. The ruby-red fire that rises from below; the primal lust of millions of years, stretches upwards, longing for more than just a kiss...

Heaven turns and looks below and beholds the magnificent beauty of the Earth. The liquid cosmic light of His mystery—a fire as blue as sapphire— flows gently down to His lover, arousing passion's fevered touch.

Their kiss is the sweetness of grapes on the vine, and Their song is that of the wind in the trees, the dance of the grasses in the breeze, the glory of the moonlight upon the water.

Together they flow, one into the next. Their kiss, Their touch, Their Holy Rut... these two flames that shine now as one, the color of wine, the color of Their bliss...

This rains down upon the Earth to touch the souls of every kind, that some among them be marked as Their special children.

But those who shine with violet souls in the world of men are forced to hide amongst the shadows.

"How then shall they know their special place? How then shall they know that they too are Gods?" asks Earth.

And Heaven says, "Behold, the star of our special love. It shall guide them to us with every breath."

And so from Earth emerges the form of crystal stone, and from Heaven flows the liquid light. Together, blended, this precious stone grows, containing the light of above and below. The mark of their love. Their gift to Their kind.

And the Amethyst Pentacle shone with the power of Heaven upon Earth.

And together they spoke:

"In innocence born into this world,
Drawn forth from darkness by desire.
Awakened by uncommon love
And named by self as act of power
To shine with brilliance, your own design
You sacrifice your greatest fear
And are born anew each day and night,
within this star that we hold dear."

And so the star was given to the Queer Ones, to remind us of our special place as children of the stars and of the earth, that we might remember our power and walk once more amongst the Gods.

In the F(a)eri(e) Tradition, we have a common practice of working with pentacles. They serve as models for balanced attitudes, emotions, and energetic states, aligning in us those traits we seek to instill in ourselves. They provide for us a symbolic map of the inner territories that we wish to explore. The Iron Pentacle, for example, is such a map, informing us of the twists and turns that are common while we are delving deeper into our spirits.

As any Queer practitioner can attest, there is a definite shortage of Queer-specific models that encourage the strengthening of ourselves as whole beings. In many Neo-Pagan Witchcraft traditions, we are told simply to adopt the pre-existing (and heterosexist) magickal modalities of polarity and fertility. In the Feri tradition we are given certain tools that enable us to have healthier relationships with our Divine natures, devoid of any such baggage. We are reminded of the concepts that each point on the pentacle represents, and when applied magickally, we are able to interact with those deepest parts of ourselves that are in resonance with the issues and energetic complexes associated with each of them. The pentacle, when used in this way, is a prime example of how a model can be used to bring us into alignment.

Alternatively, it can also represent various stages on an energetic path. Meditating upon certain life experiences common to Queer people has inspired us to develop certain tools that attempt to speak directly to our Gay souls, allowing us to include our sexuality within our spiritual identities, and vice-versa. By re-connecting to these experiential markers in our personal histories, we are better able to discern the personal cycles in our lives, and see these experiences as part of an unfolding process. We not only see how an issue such as "coming out of the closet" is a process and how it leads us to a deeper understanding of ourselves, but also how these patterns return, over and over, certain themes resurfacing over time as we peel away at the layers of our selves, learning new mysteries with every pass. With each trip along the pathways of the pentacle, we have a better chance to meet our demons, and in doing so comes the potential to make them our allies. As whole Queer people we can claim our birthright to

be spiritual, as well as sexual, beings.

Because this particular model seeks to describe a progression along a discernable path, we have identified the pathways that course between each point on the star. Though these categories are separated on the pentacle for the purpose of solidifying each facet of the Queer experience, in life they might likely overlap. These stages flow in and out of one another, and can even change places altogether.

In the presence of the Star Goddess and the Blue God, we present the Amethyst Pentacle in the hopes that it may assist us in better understanding and experiencing our Divinely Queer nature.

Innocence: the Void. Dreaming. Bliss.

(Strangeness): the beginnings of feeling "different".

Desire: yearning; longing

(Resonance): the experience of 'other' as 'self'.

Awakening: epiphany, noticing ones uniqueness

(Initiation): the engagement of something new

Identity: Creating one's identity; identifying with a community.

(Courage): the development of the Will.

Expression: Moving in the world. Making your mark.

(Freedom): The absence of boundaries or limitations.

Innocence- This refers to that time in which we were blissfully unaware of anything that might label us as being 'different' or 'other'. This was a time before we knew of our eventual identities and simply existed without making excuses for who we were. "The Black Heart of Innocence" is a Feri term that is used to refer to that natural state of the soul unfettered by societal conditioning. Ideally this state, along with all of the others on the pentacle, represent an unfolding process as opposed to a static or isolated event. Even when we find that outside judgements have infiltrated our blissful ignorance, we are not permanently damaged by them. Innocence lost need not remain so forever. By doing the hard work of self-examination and magickal application, we can seek to remove any blocks and heal any wounds that may be keeping us from returning to our more natural (and healthy) state of being. Innocence is the void of self-awareness, from which emerges the very distinction that shall help to formulate our Queer consciousness.

Strangeness- Many persons who identify as Queer can trace their sense of being different as far back as early childhood, before such time as they matured into an understanding of why they are actually different than the majority of persons around them. This sense of difference may not be unique to those who will someday be Queer-identified. Most children fantasize about their true, royal parents coming to take them to the castle that is their rightful home, or else dream of discovering that their extraterrestrial lineage will someday endow them with psionic powers. What is unique for the Queer person is that at some point they will realize the true extent to which their sense of being set apart is valid. It may be that Queers remember better that sense of difference more so than straighter persons, for in our case it was precognitive of our eventual epiphany that we are Queer. Others around us often perceive our difference as well; some realizing why; others sensing some quality they understand no better than we do. This stage invariably leads to alienation, which in its negative form causes loneliness and insecurity, although alternatively it can also cause self-reliance and independence.

Desire- The second point is Desire. It is that exciting time when our senses are enticed by something beyond ourselves, and we feel our energy reaching for it. For the gay child, an instance of this is when he finds himself inexplicably drawn to a feature of his same sex. He may not realize at this point that his arousal is sexual. Even when he does, he does not immediately understand the significance given to his erection in relation to where it points. This is the time when Narcissus first spies his reflection in the pond, just before he plunges into the depths of his self-image. What can be said of Queer culture in all its diversity is that the core commonality among all gay men is the seminal role of desire in our lives. Yearning to touch his lips to the downy haired arm of a classmate, he can feel himself doing so as he projects his spirit towards the object of his longing. As any good magician knows, it is desire that brings us into resonance with what we seek to conjure.

Resonance: This is the experience of identifying with another on a deeper level. The acknowledgement of sameness. This could be seen in the closeted gay teenager who befriends another who is also perceived as being different. Resonance is, on one level, the experience of compassion. It is that opening of the senses that allows for the experience of something 'other' as 'self'. For the Queer person, this can be the experience of feeling "at home" in a Queer-specific environment, or even a sense of comfort or recognition when in the presence of other Queer persons.

Awakening- At this stage, the person begins the process of self-acknowledgement, realizing that his sense of difference is linked to his emotional and erotic longings for persons of his same sex. He is out to himself at this point, realizing that his history of arousals and inclinations are something fundamental. Hopefully he will not fall into the trap of believing these feelings are fundamentally warped, a sickness or damnation. On the opposite extreme, he may explore the idea that he has been touched by Gods and given unique abilities. Now is when desire impels one to explore the emotions, imaginations, and sensations entangled with his arousal. This exploration might bring him to an awareness of his mystical senses as well. Or perhaps he realizes that the vibe he gets from certain guys is actually his psychic awareness, letting him know that

another's lusts are aligned with his own. Though his gaydar may have been tripped by sight of a certain visible flare in another's style, he might take note of the times when he senses another cruising him before he even gets a whiff of the latest fad cologne.

Initiation: This is about that shift of energy that occurs when we have first been exposed to something new, learned a lesson, crossed a boundary, or broken a pattern. Initiation, like its name suggests, is the beginning of the journey rather than the culmination of it. Each time we are exposed to new choices we are given the opportunity to travel a new road and learn new secrets about our lives along the way. Going to your first gay bar, or bathhouse, buying your first gay magazine, or giving head for the first time, these are the experiences that shape our sexual identity. We surrender our previous limitations in the form of our fears and preconceptions, and move forward into new territory, blazing new trails in the internal landscape. When invoked in the body, this line reaches from hand to hand and through the heart, causing us to be open and receptive to the changes those new experiences bring.

Identity- Having realized that he is part of a category of men who are drawn to intimate relations with other men, he must face whatever prejudices he has had about those with whom he now shares part of his identity. It is here that denial can rear itself, keeping him from assuming a complete identity. Those who decide to see themselves as gay must deal with their conception of what a gay man is. He must take one step or another; either his negative attitudes about homosexuals will poison his self-image, or he will adjust his idea of homosexuality to include such guys as himself. At this point, the individual is seeking to come to terms with not with his homosexuality alone, but with homosexuality as a category into which he can include himself. This can be problematic if the individual perceives the 'gay label' as a limitation. Some fear that by defining themselves as gay they are binding themselves to the boundaries of that definition. If one is homosexual, does that then exclude attributes given to heterosexuals? He must overcome the notion that by being gay he is missing out on some primal experience of being. The position he is put in is simultaneously one of having to equate his sense of being to that of the straight cultural majority, while also finding value in how his experiences are diverse from the norm. Whether or not one who is attracted to his same sex chooses to define himself as homosexual, he must realize that others might. Like any minority, he must face the question of how others view him, often wondering if those around him have negative attitudes about him. Some will be put off at having to force themselves to imagine how two men might find pleasure in one another. Others will regret that they have one less thing in common with their gay fellows. Even with all the freedom given to the sexes today to follow no traditional blueprint, there are many who feel separated by gay folk for the fact that the choices we make in our lives are different from their own. To them we are labeled as gay and expected to assume that identity. Even those of us who would prefer not to be limited by our own definitions are nonetheless defined by others. In order to face one's Queer identity, either in the mirror or in the glare of another, will require courageous effort.

Courage: It is this stage in which we most often find the archetype of the warrior. Having claimed one's identity as something other than mainstream it is necessary to bravely move forward. Working with the concept of courage can assist one in developing a state

of mind that is conducive of personal pride, and esteem, leading us to a place where we are better able to express our needs and desires. This is best seen in the occult concept of the development of the Will.

Expression- In this stage we find that the focus has shifted from the internal, to the external. The previous work has led us to a deeper understanding of ourselves and now the time has come for us to unleash our potential upon the world. In the previous stage, the focus was internal, crafting one's identity. Now one must interpret a new language, often suffused with innuendo and obscure references, learning to recognize the body language of the men he cruises. Should he seek camaraderie, he might also need to acquaint himself with such gay cultural expressions as camp, artifice, and the art of reading another's beads. He may now fully engage the world, having at last the tools necessary to express himself. The many Queer artists having graced time since Saffo represent our intrinsic need for expression. Some people have a better understanding of themselves when mirrored by others, and therefore might try a variety of labels and personalities without much thought. Having in the previous point come out to ourselves, it is now that those of us who come out to others do so. Some of us conform to a gay image that we find comfortable. Some of us try to blur the boundaries and fuck with definitions by being as unconventionally gay as possible. Either way, the members of our community share the common trait of being conscious of our identities, taking an active role in designing ourselves. Those who become isolated, from another's intolerance or of their own volition, find ways to stimulate their own entertainment, becoming creative, often artistic. Many gay men become performers from the earliest stages where they try to fit in, or attempt to not be noticed. Others flame loudly, and can find a niche as class clown. If one has a naturally nonconformist nature, then it really comes into play now. An artist strives to push the limits, to do things differently for the sake of difference alone. It is here that he begins to seek out others who share his feelings, be they sexual encounters, or the greater sphere of community.

Freedom: Having processed and expressed our complexes and emotions we can now move forward hopefully unburdened by them. This is a state of relaxed healing, in the sense that its energy is that of reflection on battles won, and a time for integration of what has been learned. Having recognized the boundaries of culture, and the structure of ourselves, only now can we be free to move beyond them. We can now project our experience outward onto the Amethyst Pentacle, allowing us to move beyond the confines of self, emptied of those burdens that come with being Queer, returning us to the state of innocence.

Working with the Amethyst Pentacle has been an interesting and eye-opening experience. Many insights have arisen for both our students and ourselves while contemplating its points and pathways. During a series of rituals atop Mt. Diablo, we invoked the Star Goddess and the Blue God to bless this work and charge it with life. We stood in the middle of a huge pentacle, chunks of amethyst at each point. We walked the pathways and invoked as we traveled its labyrinthine delineation. We sat in the center and allowed the Gods to talk to us, to inspire us. We have watched the Pentacle evolve into its present form, having revealed to us new directions and deeper understandings of the power of our Queer souls.

Having worked the Amethyst Pentacle and moved through it full circle, let us be healed and whole, bright in spirit, and fabulously Queer.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A Zine of Feri Uprising #7

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Innocence- This refers to that time in which we were blissfully unaware of anything that might label us as being 'different' or 'other'. This was a time before we knew of our eventual identities and simply existed without making excuses for who we were. "The Black Heart of Innocence" is a Feri term that is used to refer to that natural state of the soul unfettered by societal conditioning. Ideally this state, along with all of the others on the pentacle, represent an unfolding process as opposed to a static or isolated event. Even when we find that outside judgements have infiltrated our blissful ignorance, we are not permanently damaged by them. Innocence lost need not remain so forever. By doing the hard work of self-examination and magickal application, we can seek to remove any blocks and heal any wounds that may be keeping us from returning to our more natural (and healthy) state of being. Innocence is the void of self-awareness, from which emerges the very distinction that shall help to formulate our Queer consciousness.

Strangeness- Many persons who identify as Queer can trace their sense of being different as far back as early childhood, before such time as they matured into an understanding of why they are actually different than the majority of persons around them. This sense of difference may not be unique to those who will someday be Queer-identified. Most children fantasize about their true, royal parents coming to take them to the castle that is their rightful home, or else dream of discovering that their extraterrestrial lineage will someday endow them with psionic powers. What is unique for the Queer person is that at some point they will realize the true extent to which their sense of being set apart is valid. It may be that Queers remember better that sense of difference more so than straighter persons, for in our case it was precognitive of our eventual epiphany that we are Queer. Others around us often perceive our difference as well; some realizing why; others sensing some quality they understand no better than we do. This stage invariably leads to alienation, which in its negative form causes loneliness and insecurity, although alternatively it can also cause self-reliance and independence.

Desire- The second point is Desire. It is that exciting time when our senses are enticed by something beyond ourselves, and we feel our energy reaching for it. For the gay child, an instance of this is when he finds himself inexplicably drawn to a feature of his same sex. He may not realize at this point that his arousal is sexual. Even when he does, he does not immediately understand the significance given to his erection in relation to where it points. This is the time when Narcissus first spies his reflection in the pond, just before he plunges into the depths of his self-image. What can be said of Queer culture in all its diversity is that the core commonality among all gay men is the seminal role of desire in our lives. Yearning to touch his lips to the downy haired arm of

a classmate, he can feel himself doing so as he projects his spirit towards the object of his longing. As any good magician knows, it is desire that brings us into resonance with what we seek to conjure.

Resonance: This is the experience of identifying with another on a deeper level. The acknowledgement of sameness. This could be seen in the closeted gay teenager who befriends another who is also perceived as being different. Resonance is, on one level, the experience of compassion. It is that opening of the senses that allows for the experience of something 'other' as 'self'. For the Queer person, this can be the experience of feeling "at home" in a Queer-specific environment, or even a sense of comfort or recognition when in the presence of other Queer persons.

Awakening- At this stage, the person begins the process of self-acknowledgement, realizing that his sense of difference is linked to his emotional and erotic longings for persons of his same sex. He is out to himself at this point, realizing that his history of arousals and inclinations are something fundamental. Hopefully he will not fall into the trap of believing these feelings are fundamentally warped, a sickness or damnation. On the opposite extreme, he may explore the idea that he has been touched by Gods and given unique abilities. Now is when desire impels one to explore the emotions, imaginations, and sensations entangled with his arousal. This exploration might bring him to an awareness of his mystical senses as well. Or perhaps he realizes that the vibe he gets from certain guys is actually his psychic awareness, letting him know that another's lusts are aligned with his own. Though his gaydar may have been tripped by sight of a certain visible flare in another's style, he might take note of the times when he senses another cruising him before he even gets a whiff of the latest fad cologne.

Initiation: This is about that shift of energy that occurs when we have first been exposed to something new, learned a lesson, crossed a boundary, or broken a pattern. Initiation, like its name suggests, is the beginning of the journey rather than the culmination of it. Each time we are exposed to new choices we are given the opportunity to travel a new road and learn new secrets about our lives along the way. Going to your first gay bar, or bathhouse, buying your first gay magazine, or giving head for the first time, these are the experiences that shape our sexual identity. We surrender our previous limitations in the form of our fears and preconceptions, and move forward into new territory, blazing new trails in the internal landscape. When invoked in the body, this line reaches from hand to hand and through the heart, causing us to be open and receptive to the changes those new experiences bring.

Identity- Having realized that he is part of a category of men who are drawn to intimate relations with other men, he must face whatever prejudices he has had about those with whom he now shares part of his identity. It is here that denial can rear itself, keeping him from assuming a complete identity. Those who decide to see themselves as gay must deal with their conception of what a gay man is. He must take one step or another; either his negative attitudes about homosexuals will poison his self-image, or he will adjust his idea of homosexuality to include such guys as himself. At this point, the individual is seeking to come to terms with not with his homosexuality alone, but with homosexuality as a category into which he can include himself. This can be problematic if the individual perceives the 'gay label' as a limitation. Some fear that by defining

themselves as gay they are binding themselves to the boundaries of that definition. If one is homosexual, does that then exclude attributes given to heterosexuals? He must overcome the notion that by being gay he is missing out on some primal experience of being. The position he is put in is simultaneously one of having to equate his sense of being to that of the straight cultural majority, while also finding value in how his experiences are diverse from the norm. Whether or not one who is attracted to his same sex chooses to define himself as homosexual, he must realize that others might. Like any minority, he must face the question of how others view him, often wondering if those around him have negative attitudes about him. Some will be put off at having to force themselves to imagine how two men might find pleasure in one another. Others will regret that they have one less thing in common with their gay fellows. Even with all the freedom given to the sexes today to follow no traditional blueprint, there are many who feel separated by gay folk for the fact that the choices we make in our lives are different from their own. To them we are labeled as gay and expected to assume that identity. Even those of us who would prefer not to be limited by our own definitions are nonetheless defined by others. In order to face one's Queer identity, either in the mirror or in the glare of another, will require courageous effort.

Courage: It is this stage in which we most often find the archetype of the warrior. Having claimed one's identity as something other than mainstream it is necessary to bravely move forward. Working with the concept of courage can assist one in developing a state of mind that is conducive of personal pride, and esteem, leading us to a place where we are better able to express our needs and desires. This is best seen in the occult concept of the development of the Will.

Expression- In this stage we find that the focus has shifted from the internal, to the external. The previous work has led us to a deeper understanding of ourselves and now the time has come for us to unleash our potential upon the world. In the previous stage, the focus was internal, crafting one's identity. Now one must interpret a new language, often suffused with innuendo and obscure references, learning to recognize the body language of the men he cruises. Should he seek camaraderie, he might also need to acquaint himself with such gay cultural expressions as camp, artifice, and the art of reading another's beads. He may now fully engage the world, having at last the tools necessary to express himself. The many Queer artists having graced time since Saffo represent our intrinsic need for expression. Some people have a better understanding of themselves when mirrored by others, and therefore might try a variety of labels and personalities without much thought. Having in the previous point come out to ourselves, it is now that those of us who come out to others do so. Some of us conform to a gay image that we find comfortable. Some of us try to blur the boundaries and fuck with definitions by being as unconventionally gay as possible. Either way, the members of our community share the common trait of being conscious of our identities, taking an active role in designing ourselves. Those who become isolated, from another's intolerance or of their own volition, find ways to stimulate their own entertainment, becoming creative, often artistic. Many gay men become performers from the earliest stages where they try to fit in, or attempt to not be noticed. Others flame loudly, and can find a niche as class clown. If one has a naturally nonconformist nature, then it really comes into play now. An artist strives to push the limits, to do things differently for the

sake of difference alone. It is here that he begins to seek out others who share his feelings, be they sexual encounters, or the greater sphere of community.

Freedom: Having processed and expressed our complexes and emotions we can now move forward hopefully unburdened by them. This is a state of relaxed healing, in the sense that its energy is that of reflection on battles won, and a time for integration of what has been learned. Having recognized the boundaries of culture, and the structure of ourselves, only now can we be free to move beyond them. We can now project our experience outward onto the Amethyst Pentacle, allowing us to move beyond the confines of self, emptied of those burdens that come with being Queer, returning us to the state of innocence.

Working with the Amethyst Pentacle has been an interesting and eye-opening experience. Many insights have arisen for both our students and ourselves while contemplating its points and pathways. During a series of rituals atop Mt. Diablo, we invoked the Star Goddess and the Blue God to bless this work and charge it with life. We stood in the middle of a huge pentacle, chunks of amethyst at each point. We walked the pathways and invoked as we traveled its labyrinthine delineation. We sat in the center and allowed the Gods to talk to us, to inspire us. We have watched the Pentacle evolve into its present form, having revealed to us new directions and deeper understandings of the power of our Queer souls.

Having worked the Amethyst Pentacle and moved through it full circle, let us be healed and whole, bright in spirit, and fabulously Queer.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A Zine of Feri Uprising #7

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To Dispel a Curse
Protection Rites

Protection Spell
Witches Bottle
Money Spell

Healing Spell

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Personal Cleansing Rite #1

Items:

A cup of spring water
A white candle

Ground and Center. Begin to feel inner power. Light candle with the intention to purify yourself. Allow the light of the candle to resonate with your own power, making both stronger. Pick up the cup and hold it at heart level. Breathe deeply, feeling the light of the candle permeate the water... Feel your heart open and imagine that you are forming a circuit of power with the candle flame, flowing through the cup of water. "See" the water glow with that power. Allow it to become charged with power. Take three deep

breaths and then drink the water, feeling it wash away all that is impure or useless. Bask in the power of the candle and the openness you feel. Extinguish the candle. A deepening of this ritual might include performing it in the bath tub, shower, or outdoors and pouring the water over your head.

Personal Cleansing Rite #2

Items:

Sea salt

A bathtub (or shower)

Your favorite essential oils (optional)

Ground and Center. While drawing a bath hold a handful of sea salt in your power hand for the span of three deep breaths. (If you are showering then you will place the sea salt (and oils) into a small pouch made from a thin natural cloth which you will use as a washcloth.) Pour the salt into the bath water with the intent to create a healing/cleansing environment and say:

By Salt of Sea,
I call to me,
And set in motion,
This tiny ocean,
Whose briny deep,
Shall cleanse and keep
All evil deflected,
My soul protected.

Add your essential oils if you are using them and get into the bath. As you bathe, allow yourself to relax. Imagine that the stress, pain, anxiety or curse is being "drawn" from you like poison and being neutralized by the salt. When you feel ready, drain the tub imagining the neutralized energy flowing back to the ocean to be recycled. (You may wish to follow this up with the Personal Cleansing Rite #1 for added effectiveness.

Cleansing A Space (simple version)

Items:

A sage bundle (or other purification herbs)

A white candle

Ground and Center. Begin to feel inner power. Light candle with the intention to purify the area. Allow the candle flame to resonate with your inner power. Breathe into it then light the bundle of sage until it smolders. 'Smudge' the area by walking the perimeter of the area, making sure that one window (or door) remains open as an exit point for negativity. Make sure that the smoke gets into the corners of the room and take extra time on windows and doors. If a strong negative presence resides in a particular area

take some time to really fumigate that area with the smoke. When you have completed walking the perimeter you may extinguish the sage or allow it to burn out. After you feel the rite is complete, extinguish the candle.

Cleansing A Space (heavy-duty version)

Items:

A broom

A sage bundle (or other purification herbs)

A black candle

Some sea salt

Spring water

A pleasant smelling essential oil (lemon works great)

A bell (or optionally a music recording of your choice)

Begin by performing the Personal Cleansing Rite #2 and then the Personal Cleansing Rite #1. Ground and Center. Begin to feel inner power. Light the candle with the intent that all evil is being banished. Ring the bell 9 times (or you may put on your favorite song that makes you feel powerful.) Take the broom and walk counter-clockwise around the area "stirring" the air with it. Focus your intent on sweeping up negativity, getting it ready to be discarded. Burn the sage and smudge as given in the Simple version. Smudge the salt combining it with the water holding it for a time in front of the candle, meditating on the flame and imagining it to permeate the mixture. Add a few drops of the oil and say:

By earth and air,
By fire, by water, by spirit,
I charge you with purity.

Anoint yourself with the mixture on the forehead then ring the bell 3 times. Now anoint the doors and windows while you sprinkle it over the entire area. Ring bell once. Extinguish the candle. Now do something to bring in good vibrations, such as dance, or have a party.

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About this capture
To Dispel a Curse:
A Heavy-Duty Cleansing Rite
by Storm Faerywolf

curse can come in many forms. Not always does it require a maniacal practitioner of the Dark Arts, huddled over their arcane tools, muttering spells into the night. Often, what we might feel to be a curse can originate with something decidedly more mundane: a whispered rumor or a malicious thought. Left unchecked, this harmful energy can affect us adversely, be it in our private or professional lives. Regardless of its origin, we can respond magickally to this threat.

I believe that it should go without saying that prior to working this spell you should attempt whatever "mundane" actions are appropriate for your situation. Magick is part of real-life, not a substitute for it.

This spell can be performed either by the person who is the target of a curse or, in the event that they don't feel up to it, then by someone acting as a priest/ess. The duty of the priest/ess in these cases would be to act as an energetic guide for the practitioner, mediating the God/dess power into their presence.

Ideally, this should be performed seven nights prior to the Dark Moon (Check your calendar). This is to combine the power of decrease, governed by the waning moon, with the mystic significance of the number seven. However, necessity is the largest concern here. Adapt, as you deem necessary.

Items:

Sage, (or your preferred purifying herb) for burning
A black taper candle
A deep blue taper candle
Frankincense oil (or your preferred banishing/hex-breaking oil)
A "Star God/dess" oil
A "BlueGod" oil
Some Dragon's Blood resin
An unbroken, rotten egg
A spool of black all-natural cotton thread
Some sea salt
Two small cups or bowls of fresh water
A sprig of fresh rosemary (not dried)

A small amethyst
A bell
A small black natural-fiber cloth

Begin by taking a ritual bath. Perform a personal cleansing rite and then finish, toweling off and then going skyclad to your prepared ritual area. Allow yourself to become calm and centered. Perform a grounding exercise. Open up to your Holy Daemon (Higher Self, Deep Self, etc.). Feel It move through you, guiding your actions. Take a small handful of sea salt and hold it in your power-hand. Know that salt is a purifier. Allow the power of Holy Daemon to flow into the salt, charging it with purpose. Pour it into one of the small bowls of water and mix it together. Feel the water glow with the intent to purify.

Take the rosemary sprig and inhale its scent. Feel its leaves in your hands and on your face. Walking in a circle counter clock-wise, dip the rosemary into the saltwater and begin to asperge (sprinkle) the area, imagining the mixture melting away any adverse energies that may be around, leaving the area clean, pure, and fresh. While you do this, continually chant:

"Cleansed by water and by earth."

End by sprinkling some on yourself, feeling your fears and stresses flow out from you, leaving you fresh and pure. Say:

"I am cleansed."

Burn the sage and allow its smoke to waft over you. Again, open yourself up to your Holy Daemon, and again walk the circle, only now doing so clock-wise, bringing it alive with the smoke's potency and motion. Again, chant continually:

"Charged by fire and by air."

The circle having been completed, "wash" some of the smoke over your head and behind you and feel the potent charge of your Daemon. Say:

"I am charged."

Breathe three deep breaths of power. Feel the harmony of your Daemon flowing into your fetch, and into your talking self. Feel the layers of your consciousness. Feel your triple power flowing into the area around you, forming a protective and sanctifying circle. Between each breath say:

"Blessed by spirit."

Feel your own power flow back to you from all around you, like a ripple returning from

the edge of a small pond. Breathe it in with the knowledge that all things are connected and say:

"I am blessed."

Ring bell once.

With the "God/dess" oil, anoint the black candle with the intent of petitioning the Star God/dess with breaking the hex. Chant:

"Holy Mother,
Womb of the Universe,
Creator of destiny,
Eater of time,
All exists within your body,
Your power flows within my veins."

With your "BlueGod" oil, anoint the blue candle with the intent of calling to the Deity in His triple aspects of Dian y Glas, Melek Taus, and the Holy Daemon. He comes to bring joy, terror, and wisdom, to stir up the power and disrupt the hex. Say:

"From the womb of Mother Night,
The first star born to bring forth light
Falls to earth on angel's wings,
Watching, waiting, laughing, singing,
Strutting in His peacock dance,
Calling down the wild-eyed trance,
Shaking heaven, tearing hell,
The serpent rises from the well."

Place the amethyst next to the candles. You may also wish to include a piece of jewelry, or other item that you wish to charge as a magickally protective amulet. Sprinkle salt in a ring around them. Feel them being encased. Say:

"Bound together by earthen ring,
One will flow into the next.
Candlelight to crystal stone,
Be now charged to break the hex."

Feel your power flow through you as you light the candles with the solemn (and certain) intent to defeat the curse. Say:

"I cast these lights into the darkness,
Break the curse, dispel the shadow."

Ring the bell three times.

In the silence that follows, take a moment to feel the presence of the candles' wraith-force, and to feel their power permeating the amethyst and everything within the circle of salt. This will continue to build power during the rest of the ceremony.

Burn some of the Dragon's Blood on a charcoal. Pass the spool of thread through its smoke, cleansing it and charging it for magickal purpose.

If you are performing this rite by yourself, take the thread and bind the wrist and fingers of your non-dominant (or receiving) hand. If a priest/ess is officiating, then they shall bind both wrists of the practitioner together. This is to symbolically and psychically cut off the practitioner from the power of the curse. Say:

"Cord of black that ties and binds,
The weaves of fate you hope to tangle.
By your emblem, I now snare you,
Into this symbol be now bound."

On this last line, cut the thread from the spool and feel the curse's current of energy "flood" into the binding thread, snapping into place. Feel the thread now as an energetic filament, a "live-wire" of harmful energy. All energies expended in maintaining the curse are now bound in the cord.

Now we are to remove what has already been placed into the energy-body of the practitioner. Take the egg and hold it in your hands. Breathe deep, and call to your Daemon to grant you power. Anoint the egg with saltwater in the form of a five-pointed star. Pass it through the smoke of the Dragon's Blood. Say:

"Vessel of Life,
Now turned to death,
Turned, corrupted, changed, enchanted,
Remove from me the dreaded curse,
Become a vessel for its evil."

Hold the egg at the center of your forehead and call to your Daemon. Ask that the curse be moved from your life and into this egg. Begin to move the egg in small circular motions as if to "wash" the aura with it. Will the curse to leave at once and enter into the egg. Feel that the egg is actually "drawing-out" the curse and into itself, where it is being concentrated. Continue to breathe deeply and relax. Take as much time as you need.

When you have finished, place the egg onto the black cloth along with a pinch of salt, some leaves from the rosemary sprig, a bit of Dragon's Blood resin, and a drop or two of your hex-breaking oil. Take a deep breath and feel the harmful energies snapping and crackling in the binding thread. Say:

"Holy Daemon, Deepest Self,

I ask your presence fill me now,
Give me the power to break the curse,
And hurl it into the Outer Darkness!"

Take three deep breaths of power and tear the cord from your hand/wrists. Hear the searing power of the curse hiss and pop. Tangle the thread up and Will it to be bound and banished. Feel your power of control. Place the thread in with the egg and other contents, then spit into it. Take up the Star God/dess and BlueGod candles, still burning, and allow some of the black and then blue wax to drip onto the thread and the egg, speaking aloud their names as you do. Feel it "sealing" the dark power into these objects. Say:

"Conjured by power,
Conquered by power,
Bound by the emblem,
Tamed by the vessel.
Touched by the God/dess,
Changed by the Daemon.
Sealed by their Holy Names."

Return the candles to their places and then bundle up the contents in the cloth, putting it aside. This will be dealt with later. Pick up the amethyst. Place it into the cup or bowl of fresh water. Hold the cup at heart level and again be aware of your Holy Daemon. Ask to be finally cleansed of everything that has gone on before. Feel the purifying power of your Daemon flow through you and into the cup, charging it with power, mixing with the power and presence of the amethyst charged water. When the water is brilliantly shining with the power, drink with the blessing:

"I drink deep of the waters of life,
And am cleansed and healed in Her name."

Anoint yourself with the saltwater on your forehead, lips, hands, heart, belly, genitals, and feet. With each anointing, affirm the blessing:

"Blessed be my head (lips, hands, heart, etc.)"

Dress, and carrying both the bundle and the amethyst (and any jewelry or objects that you charged in the salt circle), go outside with the intent to either bury the bundle in the ground (not on your own property) or to toss it into a moving body of water. If you bury, know that the curses' power is being transmuted into something useful by Mother Earth as it decays and releases energy. If you choose the water method, then you see the energy being carried far away by the water until it is transformed by the ultimate cleansing powers of Grandmother Ocean. You may wish to say a short prayer such as:

"Power caught and bound and severed,
Into this bundle, you are placed.

I cast you out into the Darkness,
Where Mother Night can see the face
Of Her Child Star-born Lover,
Riding the powers on the wind,
They change this curse, into a blessing,
A Holy circle without end."

Ring bell once.

Return to your ritual area and disperse the circle. You may wish to take a cleansing bath to finalize the ritual. Over the next several days, carry the amethyst with you as a reminder of the magick that you performed. Especially if you feel fear or stress about your situation returning, hold onto the stone and allow those feelings to flow into it. Each night take some time to hold the amethyst and say a prayer to the Star God/dess and the BlueGod. On the night of the Dark Moon, go back to that place where you released the bundle and leave the amethyst, turning away and not looking back. Drink a lot of water. Get extra rest. Greet the next morning with a smile.

Be blessed.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #8.

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Shaking heaven, tearing hell,
The serpent rises from the well."

Place the amethyst next to the candles. You may also wish to include a piece of jewelry, or other item that you wish to charge as a magickally protective amulet. Sprinkle salt in a ring around them. Feel them being encased. Say:

"Bound together by earthen ring,
One will flow into the next.
Candlelight to crystal stone,
Be now charged to break the hex."

Feel your power flow through you as you light the candles with the solemn (and certain) intent to defeat the curse. Say:

"I cast these lights into the darkness,
Break the curse, dispel the shadow."

Ring the bell three times.

In the silence that follows, take a moment to feel the presence of the candles' wraith-force, and to feel their power permeating the amethyst and everything within the circle of salt. This will continue to build power during the rest of the ceremony.

Burn some of the Dragon's Blood on a charcoal. Pass the spool of thread through its smoke, cleansing it and charging it for magickal purpose.

If you are performing this rite by yourself, take the thread and bind the wrist and fingers of your non-dominant (or receiving) hand. If a priest/ess is officiating, then they shall bind both wrists of the practitioner together. This is to symbolically and psychically cut off the practitioner from the power of the curse. Say:

"Cord of black that ties and binds,
The weaves of fate you hope to tangle.
By your emblem, I now snare you,

Into this symbol be now bound."

On this last line, cut the thread from the spool and feel the curse's current of energy "flood" into the binding thread, snapping into place. Feel the thread now as an energetic filament, a "live-wire" of harmful energy. All energies expended in maintaining the curse are now bound in the cord.

Now we are to remove what has already been placed into the energy-body of the practitioner. Take the egg and hold it in your hands. Breathe deep, and call to your Daemon to grant you power. Anoint the egg with saltwater in the form of a five-pointed star. Pass it through the smoke of the Dragon's Blood. Say:

"Vessel of Life,
Now turned to death,
Turned, corrupted, changed, enchanted,
Remove from me the dreaded curse,
Become a vessel for its evil."

Hold the egg at the center of your forehead and call to your Daemon. Ask that the curse be moved from your life and into this egg. Begin to move the egg in small circular motions as if to "wash" the aura with it. Will the curse to leave at once and enter into the egg. Feel that the egg is actually "drawing-out" the curse and into itself, where it is being concentrated. Continue to breathe deeply and relax. Take as much time as you need.

When you have finished, place the egg onto the black cloth along with a pinch of salt, some leaves from the rosemary sprig, a bit of Dragon's Blood resin, and a drop or two of your hex-breaking oil. Take a deep breath and feel the harmful energies snapping and crackling in the binding thread. Say:

"Holy Daemon, Deepest Self,
I ask your presence fill me now,
Give me the power to break the curse,
And hurl it into the Outer Darkness!"

Take three deep breaths of power and tear the cord from your hand/wrists. Hear the searing power of the curse hiss and pop. Tangle the thread up and Will it to be bound and banished. Feel your power of control. Place the thread in with the egg and other contents, then spit into it. Take up the Star God/dess and BlueGod candles, still burning, and allow some of the black and then blue wax to drip onto the thread and the egg, speaking aloud their names as you do. Feel it "sealing" the dark power into these objects. Say:

"Conjured by power,
Conquered by power,
Bound by the emblem,
Tamed by the vessel.

Touched by the God/dess,
Changed by the Daemon.
Sealed by their Holy Names."

Return the candles to their places and then bundle up the contents in the cloth, putting it aside. This will be dealt with later. Pick up the amethyst. Place it into the cup or bowl of fresh water. Hold the cup at heart level and again be aware of your Holy Daemon. Ask to be finally cleansed of everything that has gone on before. Feel the purifying power of your Daemon flow through you and into the cup, charging it with power, mixing with the power and presence of the amethyst charged water. When the water is brilliantly shining with the power, drink with the blessing:

"I drink deep of the waters of life,
And am cleansed and healed in Her name."

Anoint yourself with the saltwater on your forehead, lips, hands, heart, belly, genitals, and feet. With each anointing, affirm the blessing:

"Blessed be my head (lips, hands, heart, etc.)"

Dress, and carrying both the bundle and the amethyst (and any jewelry or objects that you charged in the salt circle), go outside with the intent to either bury the bundle in the ground (not on your own property) or to toss it into a moving body of water. If you bury, know that the curses' power is being transmuted into something useful by Mother Earth as it decays and releases energy. If you choose the water method, then you see the energy being carried far away by the water until it is transformed by the ultimate cleansing powers of Grandmother Ocean. You may wish to say a short prayer such as:

"Power caught and bound and severed,
Into this bundle, you are placed.
I cast you out into the Darkness,
Where Mother Night can see the face
Of Her Child Star-born Lover,
Riding the powers on the wind,
They change this curse, into a blessing,
A Holy circle without end."

Ring bell once.

Return to your ritual area and disperse the circle. You may wish to take a cleansing bath to finalize the ritual. Over the next several days, carry the amethyst with you as a reminder of the magick that you performed. Especially if you feel fear or stress about your situation returning, hold onto the stone and allow those feelings to flow into it. Each night take some time to hold the amethyst and say a prayer to the Star God/dess and the BlueGod. On the night of the Dark Moon, go back to that place where you released the bundle and leave the amethyst, turning away and not looking back. Drink a lot of

water. Get extra rest. Greet the next morning with a smile.

Be blessed.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #8.

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About this capture

There are times when we feel the necessity to withdraw from the world and focus our energies inward, strengthening our Will, fortifying our resolve. When we feel challenged or threatened we can allow our magick to work in our favor, providing us with the necessary support and security. What follows are a couple different rituals that you can use at your discretion. For best results I would recommend performing a Cleansing Rite prior to these workings.
Protection Rite #1

Items:

An earthy, "grounding" incense (sandalwood, copal, myrrh, etc.)

A small pocket sized stone (black tourmaline or another similarly dark stone will suffice)

Some salt

A black candle

Ground and center. Light incense and fumigate the working area. Cast a circle by sprinkling salt in a ring around your working area. Imagine a protective wall springing up from the salt and forming around you. Hold the stone in your power hand and focus your awareness on it. Feel the hardness of the stone and notice how its energy flows differently from your own. It is slower, denser. Focus on these qualities of the stone and chant the following 3 times:

The Horned or Inverted pentacle is used to represent the Horned God, manifestation, and the powers of fierce protection.

I summon forth the strength of stone,
and conjure up these walls of rock,
Protect my soul, my flesh and bone,
My will the key, this stone the lock.

Allow the feeling to flow from the stone and into your body. Feel the strength and steadfastness of the stone and imagine that this same power is present in the walls around you. When you have sufficiently generated the necessary energy then focus your attention on the candle. Black is the color of banishing, and also of grounding, of ultimate manifestation. Feel the power of the protective stone flowing from you and into the candle as you light it and say:

Tower of light,
Fountain of force,
Circle of purity,
Ward of infinity.

Imagine that you can feel an affinity with the candle flame and that it's light is also being generated from within you, shining outward in all directions. Allow this light to reach up to the heavens like a tower, flowing up and then cascading around you like a fountain, falling down to and charging the ring of salt as the power flows beneath the ground, encasing you in a protective ward of your own making. You may wish to repeat this process several times, chanting the above in repetition until a sense of power is achieved. Walk away and allow the candle to burn completely out.

By performing this or similar rites in times of stress will provide a feeling of security and heighten your power. In addition, the stone will become charged with a protective quality that you may draw from if feeling insecure or threatened.
More Protection Spells:

Protection Spell

Witches' Bottle

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35 captures
14 Mar 2001 - 25 Jan 2021
Mar APR Sep
18
2004 2005 2008

About this capture

Items Used:
black candle
sea salt
sage or other purifying herb, such as rosemary
a small sturdy stone
nine needles from a cactus
a cauldron (or other container that can hold candle wax and herbs)

Ground and center. Hold the candle in both hands while focusing on your fear. Take at least three deep breaths and allow the feeling of your fear to flow into the candle. If there is nothing specific to protect from then simply focus on a feeling of being protected. When you have achieved this feeling and you have allowed it to flow completely into the candle, place the candle in the cauldron.

Now take some salt and make a ring around the candle three times clockwise while chanting the following:

“Three times around,
three times about,
evil is bound,
evil stays out.”

Burn some of the sage or rosemary as an incense. Allow the smoke to waft over you. Grasp your stone. You will be holding it throughout the rest of this spell. Feel how solid it is, how sturdy. Allow that feeling to permeate you. Feel strong. Revel in this sensation.

When you are feeling particularly strong, light the candle and say:

“Pillar of light,
dispersing the shadow,
consuming adversity,
protecting my destiny.”

Feel how the black candle (that which threatens you) is being consumed by the light of the flame (your power). Place the nine cactus needles in the cauldron, along with a pinch of your purifying herb. Place the stone in the cauldron and allow the candle to burn down completely. When this is done the stone can then be removed and carried as a protective amulet. If any of the cactus needles have survived intact then you should bury them somewhere around your home (even if it is in a potted plant indoors!). This will provide a protective aura to be erected around your living space.

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A witches' bottle is an ancient protection spell of great power. This is my version. I would recommend that anyone who is pursuing a magickal path make one to protect against any thought-forms, entities, spirits, demons, or simply negative energies that are bound to be encountered along the way. After charging, the bottle becomes an energetic trap for any force that intends to cause you harm. It is aligned to your energy-field through the use of your own DNA as well as symbolic powers that imprison and then transform harmful energy into something useful.

Items Used:

- a small to medium sized jar or bottle (a large spice bottle works well)
- sage, or other purifying herb such as rosemary
- a black candle
- sea salt
- parchment paper (or other "nice" stationary)
- dragon's blood ink
- rusty nails, broken glass, needles, other sharp objects
- dead bugs, some of your favorite food nicely molding, other "gross" things
- some of your hair, finger or toenail clippings
- some of your semen or menstrual blood
- some of your urine
- a handful of earth, or potting soil
- a black cotton cloth

Perform this spell alone at night. On a night before the dark moon (women will need to adjust the timing to coincide with their menstrual cycle) gather your items together to perform this spell. Ground and center. Mark a circle on the ground around you with the sea salt, moving clockwise beginning and ending in the North. Burn your herb as an incense and allow the smoke to waft over you and your area. Hold the bottle over the smoke and make sure that some gets inside it. Light the black candle saying:

"From the darkness I conjure light
from the light I summon force,
from the force I invoke the power
to trap that which intends me harm."

On the parchment write the following with Dragon's Blood Ink:

- Your full name (your magickal name will do if you identify with it.)
- Your birthdate. (Month, day, year, and time if possible)
- The symbol for your astrological sun, moon, and rising signs.
- Any other symbol that you feel represents the real "you".

Now smear some of your semen or menstrual blood onto the paper. Draw a circle around the whole thing and draw a pentagram over it, feeling that to do so is an act of power; that when the star is completed you have erected a field of protection around

you. Roll up the parchment and place inside the bottle.

Now begin to fill the bottle with the other items: your hair and clippings, nails, glass, bugs, etc. You will want to fill the bottle about halfway. Say:

“Insects from beneath a rock,
needles, nails rusting fast,,
Keep all harm inside and locked,
within this dungeon made of glass.”

Now fill the jar as far as possible with your urine, which is from your body in the act of release. This will provide a link for the energy to follow into the jar and remain. Add the handful of earth, feeling it's connection to the planet and it's ability to transform waste into fertility. Add three pinches of sea salt to the mixture. Cork the bottle or attach the lid and seal the edges with drippings from the black candle. Hold the bottle in both hands before you and in front of the candlelight so that the light shines through the bottle. Feel the power of the candle permeate your bottle, charging it with power and purpose. Say:

“I charge you, bottle, to trap all harm.
Keep me safe away from danger.
Inside darkness calls to darkness,
to be carried below
into the grave.”

Take three deep breaths and exhale all your stress, worry, doubt fear, pain, etc. into the bottle. On the last breath “hear” the power in your breath ring and resonate with the bottle. Wrap the bottle carefully in the black cloth and open your circle in the normal way. Go outside to bury the bottle in a place where it will not be disturbed. Should the bottle ever be disturbed or broken, rest assured that the negativity will not then return to you as it has already been neutralized by the salt and the handful of earth, but the bottle will cease functioning. If you end up burying it in a place that you cannot check up on its well-being, you then may want to perform this spell at different intervals, perhaps once a year on a certain date. This of course is up to you.

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19 captures
14 Mar 2001 - 9 Oct 2011
Mar APR Sep
15
2004 2005 2008

About this capture

Items Used:

Green Candle

“Earthy” incense, such as sandalwood, cedar, or patchouly.

A toothpick or another sharp item to etch on a candle.

Breathe deep. Holding the candle in your hands begin to focus on your goal. “See” it as if it has already happened. Take your time with this. Allow the feeling-sense of the goal to permeate you as you will it into the candle. Imagine that the candle is now glowing and throbbing with the power of your goal. It is just waiting to be released into the universe by burning.

Place the candle in a holder and take three deep breaths. Notice the silence at the end of your breaths, how it is the primal state of being, the backdrop upon which everything else is created. Before the time of creation was the Void. Allow yourself to “tune-into” that Void now, invoking the primal state that contains all possibility. Imagine that your breath is infused with the potential that is present in all of possibility, manifest and unmanifest.

With your attention still tuned towards your goal, light the candle and say:

“By the light of candle bright,
by the breath of dark abyss,
I call abundance now to come,
And revel with me now in bliss.”

Know that as the candle burns, the potential that you have placed within it is now transforming into something more real. Being transformed visibly into light and heat, and invisibly into manifestation, the energy of your goal is sent into the universe where it will plant the seeds that will sprout and grow into your magickal goal. Allow the candle to burn all the way down. If you cast a circle you may disperse it before the candle has

burned out or afterwards, it is entirely up to your intuition. When the candle is burned out you may wish to keep the remains (if any) as a reminder of your rite until it is manifested. This too is up to you.

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31 captures
14 Mar 2001 - 22 Apr 2021
May MAR Dec
13
2003 2005 2007

About this capture

(NOT to be used in place of professional medical care.)

Items Used:

A photograph of the person to be healed.
A green candle
A jade ring (or other green healing stone)
some red cotton thread
A drawing of the afflicted area of the body
tea tree oil
a pinch of dried lavender
a small green cloth pouch
a glass of water

Special note: If the illness has to do with cancer or another type of tumor then this will be a type of banishing and you might want to substitute black for green in this spell.

Additionally you might want to use jet or onyx instead of jade.

This is best performed during a waxing moon (or waning, if it is for banishing).

Ground and center. Breathe deep and feel your power. If you work with any Gods or Goddesses that you are particularly attuned to, especially if healing is among their attributes, feel their presence now. Hold the glass of water in both hands and feel your power, and that of the Gods, flowing into and through you. Feel it flow into the water and “see” it begin to glow with the power of healing. Say something like:

“Healing flows into this water,
flowing from Her sacred well.”

Know that the water will hold this charge until it is used. Place the cup aside for now.

Hold the candle and focus on the concept of health. You may wish to etch something on it like “<name of person> is now healed.” Rub some of the tea tree oil onto it. Put it in a holder and set it aside. Do the same with the ring, placing it over the end of the candle so that it rests on it, suspended. Sprinkle some of the water around the candleholder in a clockwise circle (counter-clockwise if you are banishing).

Hold the drawing of the afflicted area. Use your feeling-sense to delve into the area of the person’s body and feel the quality of energy there. If you imagine that it is too hot, for example, you may wish to imagine it cooling; if it is too active, you may try calming it down. Take the tea tree oil and draw a pentagram over the afflicted area with your fingers. Light the candle and say:

“I call forth light,
in the dark of night,
to heal the blight,
with strength and with might.”

Burn the drawing from the candle flame and put the ashes in the green pouch along with a pinch of lavender. Burn some of the lavender and allow the smoke to waft over the photograph as you focus on it. See the person as surrounded by a green aura of healing (or perhaps purple, or cobalt blue for a banishing). “Feel” that they are healthy, happy, and strong. If they had a broken leg, “see” them as running on perfectly strong legs; if a problem with their lungs, see them breathing effortlessly, etc. Allow your sense of their health and newfound strength to permeate the photograph. You may wish to chant something like:

”<name of person> you are healed.
<name of person> you are strong.”

You might wish to repeat this chant until you have achieved a sense of deep trance.

When you are in a deep state of trance and have felt that the healing power has been transferred to the person, then roll up the photograph and tie it with the thread. Say:

“Surrounded by a ring of jade,
encircled by the healing waters,
bound together by cord of blood,
strength restored and life renewed.”

Burn the photograph, releasing the power into the universe. Mix the resulting ashes with the ashes from the drawing and place inside the green pouch. Drink the water feeling it refresh and renew you, bringing you healing energy, keeping you cleansed. Allow the candle to burn completely out. Retrieve the ring and place inside the pouch along with the ashes. Keep this hidden until the full moon (or dark moon for a banishing) at which time it should be given to the subject of this healing. If this is not possible then it should be worn by a friend or loved one as a reminder of the healing energy.

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87 captures

2 Mar 2001 - 26 Jan 2021

Apr AUG Jan

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About this capture

Through my studies I have realized that a great source of my power originates in my identity as a gay man.

As a "walker between the worlds" in mainstream society, I have been able to find pieces of the Queer Mysteries and now know that gay men have a definite spiritual role in the evolution of human consciousness.

In tribal cultures we were recognized as a special spirit; a person of power who had come to bring vision to the tribe.

We were medicine men, healers, men of knowledge.

It is time now to re-adopt our ancient roles and to remember:
We are sacred.

Help Legalize Gay Marriage

Reading List- My current selection of recommended reading for my students.

Queer Sex Magick

The Queer Craft: Rethinking Magickal Polarity

The Amethyst Pentacle- Queer Life Passages as Gateways to Divinity

Hall of Mirrors- a meditation of sexual transformation.

The Origin of the Queer Ones- a re-telling of an ancient myth.

A Ganymede Tale- my version of the myth.

Narcissus- A poetic new take on an old friend.

Invocation of the Queer Ones

The Holy Cock- A poem

The Queer Triangle- An exercise in Queer Empowerment.

Remembering Matthew- we will never forget.

The boy Ganymede with his lover Zeus (depicted as an eagle). Just one of the many queer myths we never learned about in school! [Click Here](#) to learn more.

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Support Marriage Equality for ALL!

646,609

Petition Signatures as of today!

From coast to coast, we are coming closer to achieving true marriage equality for GLBT Americans. But we need your help to fight efforts to deny marriage rights to same-sex couples, including any Constitutional amendment. Please, sign the Million For Marriage petition below, and be a part of this historic civil rights battle. Gay, straight, married, single...we need everyone who believes in marriage equality to stand up NOW.

Full Petition Text:

I do support the right of every American to marry, including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender couples. I believe that marriage and other civil rights protections are essential to making all families safer and more secure.

By signing this petition, I agree to support efforts to make marriage equality a reality in our country, and to oppose any attempts to discriminate against GLBT couples and individuals.

Signed by:

[Your name]

[Your address]

Sign this Petition

Sign This Petition

_Prefix :

First Name:*

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Address:

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About this capture

by Storm Faerywolf

"All acts of love and pleasure are My rituals..."

-The Charge of the Goddess

Few discussions of occult interest receive such scandalous attention as does the topic of sex magick. This is undoubtedly due to our society's lack of both understanding and respect for sexuality, and the body as a whole; a society which seeks to regulate the use of our bodies and legislate sexual expression. By viewing sexuality as either sin or obsession, we shield our eyes and betray our fear to look into the depths of the transformative well of power that it holds for us. We fail to see that it too is sacred. When we open ourselves to the erotic energy of the universe, we participate in it's cosmic dance and become living poetry. With every sway of our hips a world is born; with every long drawn breath, the death of a star. Creation and destruction spiral through us to infinity, building with a swelling desire, calling to us the Old Gods that they may celebrate through our embraces, and in this way we are truly priests of the old ways.

I define sex magick as the practice of channeling energy generated from sexual expression into a desired goal through the use of symbolism and focused intent. Often this entails the ritualization of sexual activity through the use of applied breathing techniques designed to relax the body and mind. This can be followed by the invocation of deities into the bodies of the participants or working area. Finally the erotic energy is directed into a desired result by means of visualization. This is usually but not always, at the point of climax.

The level of focused awareness necessary to channel sexual energy effectively is not easily achieved without the use of a psychic model; a symbolic map. Without the use of such a system it is far too easy to become distracted and as a result cause the working to fail. In most of the Wiccan traditions of witchcraft there is a strong emphasis on sexual polarity as a model for magickal/ritual working. Simply stated, this is the belief that magickal energy is generated most strongly by a male and female working partnership, a concept that was popularized by the Gardnerian tradition and has been

passed down in some form to the vast majority of witchcraft traditions being practiced today. Even in traditions where this polarity is seen to be internalized (i.e. the idea that we each contain an inner male and female which strive for balance regardless of our physical gender) we find that, ultimately, the model we have adopted is still a heterosexual one: that of polarized or complimentary forces being identified as male and female, thereby enshrining this model as the template for all real relationships whether they be romantic, magickal, or otherwise. For Queers this can be a dangerous practice.

The identification of universal forces with sexual imagery is a powerful practice and not one that I would discourage quickly. Sexuality is a wonderful and sacred gift. It is also a fantastic force able to reach in and touch us at our core, deepening our spirit, healing our souls, and grounding this experience in the body. It is this last statement that I find to be especially important. When we experience something on a gut or body level we have in one sense mastered it, that is to say we have been able to open ourselves and allow it to move fully through us giving us a greater understanding, not as a mental construct, but as a tangible fact.

Recognizing the power and importance of sexual energy, modern witchcraft has given us a model that effectively utilizes this current of power and makes it available to the majority of practitioners through identification with their natural inclination towards a sexual union with the opposite sex. It is a powerful model, and one that Queers can adopt at times (it is, after all, the type of energetic relationship that brought each of us, gay or straight, into being).

But when we as Queers start believing that it is the only model, then we have fallen into the trap of accepting the roles that others have deemed appropriate for us, and this is a practice that promises to tear away from us the very power that our Queer identities hold: that of being the spiritual Other, the fanciful two-spirit who exists outside the confines of established social order and tradition. We are truly the Fae, walking between the worlds, being neither here nor there and yet everywhere, changing our shape and identities at will, making myth, making magick, making love. We are sacred.

I am not proposing that we abandon the idea of a magickal polarity altogether. It is a very effective and real power that can and should be utilized both in magick and in personal growth. What I am suggesting is that we, Queer practitioners of the Craft, begin to define our own models for magickal working, polar or otherwise. When we have the courage and determination to look deep within our own souls and relationships, we can then begin to piece together what a Queer model might look like. Below I give some examples of alternatives to the heterosexist model.

I have provided a very basic ritual structure which can be used as a container for the symbolic drama. Feel free to elaborate on it as is necessary.

Begin by performing meditative breathing. For more information on this please refer to my meditations page, and familiarize yourself with a consistent practice.

If working alone allow yourself to relax fully before moving on to the next step. If working in a group try synchronizing your breathing with your partner(s) while maintaining constant eye contact if possible. More than 2 people might experiment with moving energy in a circle through their bodies with the breath. This should be done for at least a few minutes. This forms an energetic bond between the participants and generates a current of power that will be used to make magick.

When the link has been established, an invocation can be used to focus specific energies into the body. This can be something simple, like describing the energy/deity in detail until an energetic sense of it is achieved. Or this can be elaborate, such as performing a special dance, singing a song, or the recitation of poetry, perhaps written especially for the working. Experiment to see what works best for you.

Take your time to familiarize yourself with these models, both in meditation and in research. Only when you are able to maintain a sense of these specific powers will you find the use of them effective in magick. After you have identified with a particular energy you can allow it to move through you in your sexual expression. The key is to focus your awareness on the magickal intent while at the same time raising energy sexually. This is where a conscious breathing technique proves most useful, causing the participant to constantly be aware of the Now, preventing awareness from flowing off in the heat of passion. Fixing the attention in this way provides the opportunity for power to emerge.

The following models are lacking any specific visualizations in order to allow for spontaneity. With some imagination these can be adopted for solo or group workings.

Polarity as the turning of the seasons. This could be mythically expressed in the concept of the Oak King and the Holly King representing the light and dark halves of the year, together becoming the cycle of eternity. Feel the complimentary forces moving through you, making a powerful current as erotic energy is raised. Notice if you can change the quality of that energy.

Polarity as dynamic trinity. expressed as the triple expression of divinity. Brother, Father, Lover or perhaps as the Father, the Son, and the Lover. With a little imagination this could also be related to the Feri tradition concept of the Three Souls. Try directing the energy into and out of your bodies through the breath or through touch.

Polarity as the elements. This could allow for more than 3 people in a polyamorous relationship. This works best for a four or five person setting, however this could be extended to eight (or even nine) people by recognizing the cross-quarters in the directional wheel (i.e. north-east; the earth of air, south-west; the fire of water, etc.)

Whereas it is possible to assign the role of Spirit or Ether to a person, I feel it might prove more beneficial to allow that role to emerge as the dynamic interaction of all other roles present; spirit emerging from the other elements in perfect harmony.

Polarity as Rhythm and Melody. An example could be bass drums and flutes, each representing different powers, but coming together to provide the whole picture, in this case represented as a musical one.

With the energies flowing through you, see what qualities emerge during love making. Even if we perform these exercises in our solitude we can tap into the power that our bodies produce in the form of pleasure. If used consciously we can heal ourselves and those around us. By living in a grounded sexual current we are more likely to live in harmony with our bodies, and by extension, the natural world. "Celestial Dreaming" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf

When the current reaches it's highest point (usually at sexual climax) the desired goal is visualized as "absorbing" the energy, being charged by it. An object or picture may be used as a point of focus, as well as a simple chant or poem, to help ensure that the symbolic power is firmly implanted in the minds/fields of the participants. Afterwards a time of silent meditation may follow, providing the body a chance to wind down and regain it's balance and allowing the energy to completely flow into the universe. A simple grounding exercise may be performed if desired.

Besides polarity, there are other models that we may adopt in order to understand our unique power. One alternative might be that of Resonance, the idea of power calling to itself. In a Queer relationship we can see this as two (or more) souls of like gender/power singing together creating a harmony. Imagine a duet and the special quality of singing voices merging together. Another alternative might be the identification with the concept of Ecstasy. Participants, allowing erotic energy to build, would encourage themselves to focus on the sensations of the body and draw inspiration from it, allowing themselves to express freely whatever arises, be it singing, dancing, or loving. Whatever model is used at any given time, it is our spiritual birthright to adopt new ways of being, of loving. When used in a conscious and responsible way, sexuality proves to be one of our greatest sources of power. Love safely.

An expanded article on this theme can be found [here](#).

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About this capture

The Queer Craft: Rethinking Magickal Polarity

By Storm Faerywolf

“Opposites attract.”

“Like attracts like.”

“As above; so below.”

In most Wiccan traditions of modern witchcraft there is a strong emphasis on sexual polarity as a model for magickal/ritual working. Simply stated, this is the belief that magickal energy is generated most strongly (and perhaps only) by a male and female working partnership, a concept that was popularized by the Gardnerian tradition and has been passed down in some form to the vast majority of modern witchcraft traditions being practiced today. Even in traditions where this polarity is seen to be internalized (i.e. the idea that we each contain an inner male and female which strive for balance regardless of our physical gender) we find that, ultimately, the model we have adopted is still a heterosexist one: that of polarized or complimentary forces being identified as male and female, thereby enshrining this model as the template for all real relationships whether they be romantic, magickal, or otherwise. For Queers this can be a dangerous practice.

When I use the term “Queer” it is an attempt to reach poetically (and therefore magickally) into the realm of “the Other”, the walker between the worlds, the dancer at the gate of twilight. Being Queer is a vitally important aspect of who I am; of how I relate to the Universe. It is much more than sharing my bed with another man. It colors my perception, focusing my awareness in a way that is different from that of the mainstream.

My own experience has shown me that as a gay man I exist outside the parameters of “normal” society, and because of this provide a necessary function for society at large. Like all ways into Power this is a double-edged sword, a blessing and a curse. Because gender roles are imprinted on each of us from even the very beginnings of our lives, and because my natural inclination was unlike the stereotypical masculine role that was expected of me, I began to experiment with other modes of being. After having been wrapped up in a “cocoon” of self-denial and protective obscurity I had emerged transformed from my closet as a being of power; my perspective, being proudly different, became my source of strength, a formidable ally. I had learned a simple truth: that I was fine just the way I was. I wasn't defectively “in between” maleness and femaleness (a common misunderstanding of the Queer experience in general), but

instead I represented something “Other” that could at times encompass traits usually described as masculine or feminine, but also had qualities that were beyond the normal limits of both. By standing outside, not only was I better able to see the limitations of the mainstream perspective, but I also allowed the mainstream itself to better know who it was and where it stood. By simply being what it isn't, Queer people are able to reflect the mainstream back to itself, providing a reference point for it to better understand its place in the Universe. This power is not found in spite of who we are, but because of who we are. Whether this manifests as artistic expression, shamanic power, sexual adventurism (or even a beautifully decorated home!) we find commonalities in experience.

Although I have heard from others on numerous occasions who are unable to reconcile either their own Queer-ness or that of others with the overt sexual fertility of modern Paganism, being gay in the Craft has never been an issue for me. I realize that some still believe that Witchcraft can only be performed with the male/female magickal current, but that only reflects their own relationship to the Source. There are many pathways to power; many models of spirit. Heterosexuality can be one, the male/female polarity spins into effect causing the birth of new life. Homosexuality is another, we borderline the ecstatic, bringing art and ideas into being.

It is my understanding that what we call “sexual orientation” represents an energetic vibration that manifests in the physical realm as sexual preference. Every quality that we possess, everything that we are is the vibration of our soul(s), whether it is sexuality, artistic talent, or athletic prowess. When we put it all together I imagine it to be rather like a song, the melody and rhythm being the orchestration of who we are on a soul level. Part of Witchcraft for me has been getting to know this song, and singing it with power.

The “Sacred Hermaphrodite”, the conjoining of the male/female principal is sometimes invoked as the spiritual force that embodies the Queer experience. It is inaccurate to believe, however, that this is what being gay is: a place in between male and female. It can be that, at times, but it is not only that. The Yin/Yang model doesn't accurately describe the Universe in its entirety, just as the God/Goddess model fails to do the same. These are maps and metaphors that we have set into place in an attempt to have a relationship to the cosmos at large, but we should understand that these models themselves can not completely define the Universe. No model ever could. “Whatever you may say something is, it is not! ... the map is not the territory ... the word is not the thing.” (Alfred Korzybski)

This isn't meant to imply that the Gods are merely psychological constructs or feel good stories. The Gods are real, but we should understand that they are not bound by physical limitations, and being non-human in origin are much more “fluid” in their existence. Gods can appear female and Goddesses male, just as they appear as a deer, or a stone, or a thunderstorm.

As an alternative to viewing polarity in heterosexist terms, we should feel empowered to adopt additional models as pathways into magickal perspectives at large. This not only

enables Queer practitioners with an energetic map that could potentially speak directly to our own experience, but also provides everyone, regardless of gender identity, with a deepened understanding of magick, polarity, and ourselves.

There are numerous symbols that we can draw upon to this end. For example, the turning of the seasons could be mythically expressed in the concept of the Oak King and the Holly King (or the Bright Mother and Dark Mother) representing the light and dark halves of the year, together becoming the cycle of eternity. In this example, polarity is seen in same gendered terms, but still retains the essential quality of complimentary forces.

We can also turn our attention to non-gender specific examples of polarity, such as Rhythm and Melody. This could be seen as bass drum and flute, each representing different powers, but coming together to provide the whole picture, in this example a musical one. This brings to light the idea that polarities are not pairs of energies in opposition to one another, but are instead complimentary forces in every meaning of the term. With this in mind, we might also see polarities in motion and stillness, form and formlessness, holding and releasing, feeling and knowing. As our understanding of energy increases, so does our ability to experience it, and to comprehend.

But why should we limit ourselves to just two forces? Our understanding of physics has demonstrated four fundamental forces at play in the universe: strong force, gravity, electromagnetism, and weak force. These last two have already been demonstrated as being part of the same force and in fact it is the unification of all of these forces into a singular unified field theory, which is the Holy Grail of modern physics. In the realm of the mythic this is the quest for the Star Goddess, the primary source of creation, that from which all things are born. The magickal model of polarity most closely resembles at first glance that of electromagnetism; most notably in its observation that negatively and positively charged forces interact to form a current. But it is possible to look beyond the dualistic power, real and strong as it undoubtedly is, and see its place amongst others of equal importance. Many valuable insights can be derived from examining the interactions between not only two, but several forces at once. The power of the three souls in harmony, or the interplay between the four (and five) elements are but two examples that we as Witches should be familiar with. By experimenting with different models we can begin to delve into the unknown and bring back power from the abyss.

Polarities aside, there are other models that we may adopt in order to understand our unique power. One alternative is the concept of resonance, the idea of like powers calling to each other. In a Queer relationship we can see this as two (or more) souls of like gender/vibration singing together creating a harmony. We might imagine a duet and the special quality of singing voices merging together. In psychological terms this is the concept of identification; we see ourselves in our partner, or perhaps those qualities in ourselves that we wish to accentuate. This can be a powerful tool in terms of a magickal practice when applied to the relationships we share with the world, not just our romantic ones. We can see each other, as well as ourselves, in a lover, a star, or a dream. We identify with the world in a very real sense, and by doing so real power is generated. We

become more fluid, no longer fixed to our limited illusory personality. When we identify with the world, we become the world.

In Feri we are all familiar with the Iron Pentacle as a central meditational teaching tool of our Craft. It is sometimes taught that the point of Sex represents the attraction of forces that exist in a polarity, but what if this can also be understood to reflect resonance? With this in mind we might imagine the energy of the Sex point to be the underlying energy of existence, calling to itself through our awareness, and then merging with us. In my experience this difference is at once both subtle and distinct, allowing for a more deeply personal relationship with the energy. When used in conjunction with the model of the chakras, we may find it useful to focus on the qualities of the second, sometimes referred to as Svadhisthana (from the Hindu root svad, meaning 'to sweeten'). When doing so we are reminded of that chakras' elemental association with water, and its qualities of merging. When engaged in sexual activity we are, ideally, in an energetically open state and are inclined to blend energetically with our partner(s), if any. By focusing on this particular aspect, we can train ourselves to open more readily to sexual power specifically, and to magickal power in general.

Another alternative might be in the contemplation of Ecstasy, to literally "stand outside ourselves". Though not exclusively, this concept may be very appropriately approached through our sexuality. When consciously directed, energy generated through sexual activity can be a formidable ally in the deepening of perception and the gathering of power. Inspiration can be drawn from the sensations of our bodies, allowing us to express freely whatever arises in our Black Hearts, be it singing, dancing, trancing, or loving. By breaking free from the death grip of the Ego we are finally able to see beyond our normally limited awareness and can begin to touch on those powers which are of primal importance to the health and happiness of our soul(s).

To some, the adoption of alternate models might seem like a triviality, especially those that do not intend to exclusively replace the original. Why a new one if the old still works? I believe that we all can benefit from the interplay of diverse views. It is in the subtle differences of our own unique experiences that make these models personal and powerful when put into practice. As long as we understand that beyond the description lies reality, then we have begun to pierce the veil and perceive the truth, whatever that may be for each of us.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A 'Zine of Feri Uprising #2.

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About this capture
The Amethyst Pentacle
Exploring Queer Life Passages as Gateways to Divinity
By Chas Bogan and Storm Faerywolf
They are lovers. Entwined. Eternal.
Call them Brothers or Sisters, Fathers or Mothers, Friends or Lovers... they are just words. It is Their love that matters.

Call Them Heaven and Earth and we can see Them: The Earth who looks upon the face of Heaven and beholds the face of His beloved. The ruby-red fire that rises from below; the primal lust of millions of years, stretches upwards, longing for more than just a kiss...

Heaven turns and looks below and beholds the magnificent beauty of the Earth. The liquid cosmic light of His mystery—a fire as blue as sapphire— flows gently down to His lover, arousing passion's fevered touch.

Their kiss is the sweetness of grapes on the vine, and Their song is that of the wind in the trees, the dance of the grasses in the breeze, the glory of the moonlight upon the water.

Together they flow, one into the next. Their kiss, Their touch, Their Holy Rut... these two flames that shine now as one, the color of wine, the color of Their bliss...

This rains down upon the Earth to touch the souls of every kind, that some among them be marked as Their special children.

But those who shine with violet souls in the world of men are forced to hide amongst the shadows.

"How then shall they know their special place? How then shall they know that they too are Gods?" asks Earth.

And Heaven says, "Behold, the star of our special love. It shall guide them to us with every breath."

And so from Earth emerges the form of crystal stone, and from Heaven flows the liquid

light. Together, blended, this precious stone grows, containing the light of above and below. The mark of their love. Their gift to Their kind.

And the Amethyst Pentacle shone with the power of Heaven upon Earth.

And together they spoke:

"In innocence born into this world,
Drawn forth from darkness by desire.
Awakened by uncommon love
And named by self as act of power
To shine with brilliance, your own design
You sacrifice your greatest fear
And are born anew each day and night,
within this star that we hold dear."

And so the star was given to the Queer Ones, to remind us of our special place as children of the stars and of the earth, that we might remember our power and walk once more amongst the Gods.

In the F(a)eri(e) Tradition, we have a common practice of working with pentacles. They serve as models for balanced attitudes, emotions, and energetic states, aligning in us those traits we seek to instill in ourselves. They provide for us a symbolic map of the inner territories that we wish to explore. The Iron Pentacle, for example, is such a map, informing us of the twists and turns that are common while we are delving deeper into our spirits.

As any Queer practitioner can attest, there is a definite shortage of Queer-specific models that encourage the strengthening of ourselves as whole beings. In many Neo-Pagan Witchcraft traditions, we are told simply to adopt the pre-existing (and heterosexist) magickal modalities of polarity and fertility. In the Feri tradition we are given certain tools that enable us to have healthier relationships with our Divine natures, devoid of any such baggage. We are reminded of the concepts that each point on the pentacle represents, and when applied magickally, we are able to interact with those deepest parts of ourselves that are in resonance with the issues and energetic complexes associated with each of them. The pentacle, when used in this way, is a prime example of how a model can be used to bring us into alignment.

Alternatively, it can also represent various stages on an energetic path. Meditating upon certain life experiences common to Queer people has inspired us to develop certain tools that attempt to speak directly to our Gay souls, allowing us to include our sexuality within our spiritual identities, and vice-versa. By re-connecting to these experiential markers in our personal histories, we are better able to discern the personal cycles in our lives, and see these experiences as part of an unfolding process. We not only see

how an issue such as "coming out of the closet" is a process and how it leads us to a deeper understanding of ourselves, but also how these patterns return, over and over, certain themes resurfacing over time as we peel away at the layers of our selves, learning new mysteries with every pass. With each trip along the pathways of the pentacle, we have a better chance to meet our demons, and in doing so comes the potential to make them our allies. As whole Queer people we can claim our birthright to be spiritual, as well as sexual, beings.

Because this particular model seeks to describe a progression along a discernable path, we have identified the pathways that course between each point on the star. Though these categories are separated on the pentacle for the purpose of solidifying each facet of the Queer experience, in life they might likely overlap. These stages flow in and out of one another, and can even change places altogether.

In the presence of the Star Goddess and the Blue God, we present the Amethyst Pentacle in the hopes that it may assist us in better understanding and experiencing our Divinely Queer nature.

Innocence: the Void. Dreaming. Bliss.
(Strangeness): the beginnings of feeling "different".

Desire: yearning; longing

(Resonance): the experience of 'other' as 'self'.

Awakening: epiphany; noticing ones uniqueness

(Initiation): the engagement of something new

Identity: Creating one's identity; identifying with a community.

(Courage): the development of the Will.

Expression: Moving in the world. Making your mark.

(Freedom): The absence of boundaries or limitations.

Innocence- This refers to that time in which we were blissfully unaware of anything that might label us as being 'different' or 'other'. This was a time before we knew of our eventual identities and simply existed without making excuses for who we were. "The Black Heart of Innocence" is a Feri term that is used to refer to that natural state of the soul unfettered by societal conditioning. Ideally this state, along with all of the others on the pentacle, represent an unfolding process as opposed to a static or isolated event. Even when we find that outside judgements have infiltrated our blissful ignorance, we

are not permanently damaged by them. Innocence lost need not remain so forever. By doing the hard work of self-examination and magickal application, we can seek to remove any blocks and heal any wounds that may be keeping us from returning to our more natural (and healthy) state of being. Innocence is the void of self-awareness, from which emerges the very distinction that shall help to formulate our Queer consciousness.

Strangeness- Many persons who identify as Queer can trace their sense of being different as far back as early childhood, before such time as they matured into an understanding of why they are actually different than the majority of persons around them. This sense of difference may not be unique to those who will someday be Queer-identified. Most children fantasize about their true, royal parents coming to take them to the castle that is their rightful home, or else dream of discovering that their extraterrestrial lineage will someday endow them with psionic powers. What is unique for the Queer person is that at some point they will realize the true extent to which their sense of being set apart is valid. It may be that Queers remember better that sense of difference more so than straighter persons, for in our case it was precognitive of our eventual epiphany that we are Queer. Others around us often perceive our difference as well; some realizing why; others sensing some quality they understand no better than we do. This stage invariably leads to alienation, which in its negative form causes loneliness and insecurity, although alternatively it can also cause self-reliance and independence.

Desire- The second point is Desire. It is that exciting time when our senses are enticed by something beyond ourselves, and we feel our energy reaching for it. For the gay child, an instance of this is when he finds himself inexplicably drawn to a feature of his same sex. He may not realize at this point that his arousal is sexual. Even when he does, he does not immediately understand the significance given to his erection in relation to where it points. This is the time when Narcissus first spies his reflection in the pond, just before he plunges into the depths of his self-image. What can be said of Queer culture in all its diversity is that the core commonality among all gay men is the seminal role of desire in our lives. Yearning to touch his lips to the downy haired arm of a classmate, he can feel himself doing so as he projects his spirit towards the object of his longing. As any good magician knows, it is desire that brings us into resonance with what we seek to conjure.

Resonance: This is the experience of identifying with another on a deeper level. The acknowledgement of sameness. This could be seen in the closeted gay teenager who befriends another who is also perceived as being different. Resonance is, on one level, the experience of compassion. It is that opening of the senses that allows for the experience of something 'other' as 'self'. For the Queer person, this can be the experience of feeling "at home" in a Queer-specific environment, or even a sense of comfort or recognition when in the presence of other Queer persons.

Awakening- At this stage, the person begins the process of self-acknowledgement, realizing that his sense of difference is linked to his emotional and erotic longings for persons of his same sex. He is out to himself at this point, realizing that his history of arousals and inclinations are something fundamental. Hopefully he will not fall into the

trap of believing these feelings are fundamentally warped, a sickness or damnation. On the opposite extreme, he may explore the idea that he has been touched by Gods and given unique abilities. Now is when desire impels one to explore the emotions, imaginations, and sensations entangled with his arousal. This exploration might bring him to an awareness of his mystical senses as well. Or perhaps he realizes that the vibe he gets from certain guys is actually his psychic awareness, letting him know that another's lusts are aligned with his own. Though his gaydar may have been tripped by sight of a certain visible flare in another's style, he might take note of the times when he senses another cruising him before he even gets a whiff of the latest fad cologne.

Initiation: This is about that shift of energy that occurs when we have first been exposed to something new, learned a lesson, crossed a boundary, or broken a pattern. Initiation, like its name suggests, is the beginning of the journey rather than the culmination of it. Each time we are exposed to new choices we are given the opportunity to travel a new road and learn new secrets about our lives along the way. Going to your first gay bar, or bathhouse, buying your first gay magazine, or giving head for the first time, these are the experiences that shape our sexual identity. We surrender our previous limitations in the form of our fears and preconceptions, and move forward into new territory, blazing new trails in the internal landscape. When invoked in the body, this line reaches from hand to hand and through the heart, causing us to be open and receptive to the changes those new experiences bring.

Identity- Having realized that he is part of a category of men who are drawn to intimate relations with other men, he must face whatever prejudices he has had about those with whom he now shares part of his identity. It is here that denial can rear itself, keeping him from assuming a complete identity. Those who decide to see themselves as gay must deal with their conception of what a gay man is. He must take one step or another; either his negative attitudes about homosexuals will poison his self-image, or he will adjust his idea of homosexuality to include such guys as himself. At this point, the individual is seeking to come to terms with not with his homosexuality alone, but with homosexuality as a category into which he can include himself. This can be problematic if the individual perceives the 'gay label' as a limitation. Some fear that by defining themselves as gay they are binding themselves to the boundaries of that definition. If one is homosexual, does that then exclude attributes given to heterosexuals? He must overcome the notion that by being gay he is missing out on some primal experience of being. The position he is put in is simultaneously one of having to equate his sense of being to that of the straight cultural majority, while also finding value in how his experiences are diverse from the norm. Whether or not one who is attracted to his same sex chooses to define himself as homosexual, he must realize that others might. Like any minority, he must face the question of how others view him, often wondering if those around him have negative attitudes about him. Some will be put off at having to force themselves to imagine how two men might find pleasure in one another. Others will regret that they have one less thing in common with their gay fellows. Even with all the freedom given to the sexes today to follow no traditional blueprint, there are many who feel separated by gay folk for the fact that the choices we make in our lives are different from their own. To them we are labeled as gay and expected to assume that identity. Even those of us who would prefer not to be limited by our own definitions are

nonetheless defined by others. In order to face one's Queer identity, either in the mirror or in the glare of another, will require courageous effort.

Courage: It is this stage in which we most often find the archetype of the warrior. Having claimed one's identity as something other than mainstream it is necessary to bravely move forward. Working with the concept of courage can assist one in developing a state of mind that is conducive of personal pride, and esteem, leading us to a place where we are better able to express our needs and desires. This is best seen in the occult concept of the development of the Will.

Expression- In this stage we find that the focus has shifted from the internal, to the external. The previous work has led us to a deeper understanding of ourselves and now the time has come for us to unleash our potential upon the world. In the previous stage, the focus was internal, crafting one's identity. Now one must interpret a new language, often suffused with innuendo and obscure references, learning to recognize the body language of the men he cruises. Should he seek camaraderie, he might also need to acquaint himself with such gay cultural expressions as camp, artifice, and the art of reading another's beads. He may now fully engage the world, having at last the tools necessary to express himself. The many Queer artists having graced time since Saffo represent our intrinsic need for expression. Some people have a better understanding of themselves when mirrored by others, and therefore might try a variety of labels and personalities without much thought. Having in the previous point come out to ourselves, it is now that those of us who come out to others do so. Some of us conform to a gay image that we find comfortable. Some of us try to blur the boundaries and fuck with definitions by being as unconventionally gay as possible. Either way, the members of our community share the common trait of being conscious of our identities, taking an active role in designing ourselves. Those who become isolated, from another's intolerance or of their own volition, find ways to stimulate their own entertainment, becoming creative, often artistic. Many gay men become performers from the earliest stages where they try to fit in, or attempt to not be noticed. Others flame loudly, and can find a niche as class clown. If one has a naturally nonconformist nature, then it really comes into play now. An artist strives to push the limits, to do things differently for the sake of difference alone. It is here that he begins to seek out others who share his feelings, be they sexual encounters, or the greater sphere of community.

Freedom: Having processed and expressed our complexes and emotions we can now move forward hopefully unburdened by them. This is a state of relaxed healing, in the sense that its energy is that of reflection on battles won, and a time for integration of what has been learned. Having recognized the boundaries of culture, and the structure of ourselves, only now can we be free to move beyond them. We can now project our experience outward onto the Amethyst Pentacle, allowing us to move beyond the confines of self, emptied of those burdens that come with being Queer, returning us to the state of innocence.

Working with the Amethyst Pentacle has been an interesting and eye-opening experience. Many insights have arisen for both our students and ourselves while contemplating its points and pathways. During a series of rituals atop Mt. Diablo, we invoked the Star Goddess and the Blue God to bless this work and charge it with life.

We stood in the middle of a huge pentacle, chunks of amethyst at each point. We walked the pathways and invoked as we traveled its labyrinthine delineation. We sat in the center and allowed the Gods to talk to us, to inspire us. We have watched the Pentacle evolve into its present form, having revealed to us new directions and deeper understandings of the power of our Queer souls.

Having worked the Amethyst Pentacle and moved through it full circle, let us be healed and whole, bright in spirit, and fabulously Queer.

This article originally appeared in Witch Eye: A Zine of Feri Uprising #7

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September 14, 2002

http://faerywolf.com/med_hall_mirror.htm

33 captures

2 Mar 2001 - 10 Oct 2013

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19

2004 2005 2006

About this capture

HALL OF MIRRORS

A Meditation for Personal Transformation

adapted by Storm Faerywolf

from discussion with Kalyn Smith-Tranquil'son and Joi Wolfwomyn

For Kalyn, whose presence will always be felt.

Close your eyes. Begin to allow your body to relax. Feel the darkness that exists around you. Feel the cool nothingness that surrounds you. Now, begin to see, off in the distance, a flashing blue light. You are drawn closer to it. Begin to see the dark void as taking form. Begin to see the earth separate from the skies, and begin to see your surroundings as a serene countryside. Off in the distance, you can still make out that flashing light. Flashing in a rhythm. You walk closer. As you get closer to your destination, you begin to hear a familiar sound: children laughing, singing and playing, and the continuous sound of a carousel. As you step into a clearing, you find yourself upon a traveling carnival. You can smell the cotton candy and the popcorn. Just as you find yourself lulling to the sounds of the music, you hear someone calling out your name from your left. You turn to find an old woman, who is sitting in the

doorway of a large building. She motions you to come over to her, and as you do, you are filled with a sense of familiarity. Do you know her? Have you met somewhere before? She takes your hand and rises, leading you into the large, dark, building that exists behind her. Almost before you can think to protest, she has led you into a dark hallway, the walls covered with mirrors. "These are for you," she says, "Only they will free you."

You are immediately drawn to them, their undulating surfaces mocking your awareness, causing perception and intent to fuse into a razors' edge which carves into the dark recesses of desire and memory. You are transfixed.

You begin to explore the hallway when you come upon the first mirror. It is full length, as they all are, and there is just enough light to see your reflection clearly.

As you continue searching, you come upon the second mirror. "Nothing special.", but then you realize that something is different. It must be the darkness, you think to yourself, but then there it is. In this mirror you can see your reflection, dressed in a formal floor length gown made entirely of blue satin. Your throat is adorned with a diamond necklace, and your clear, soft, face, is made up, lipstick and all! Are you happy? Shocked? Horrified? Excited? Ask yourself why... "Sunflower Girls" ©2001 Storm Faerywolf

You turn quickly from the mirror, only to be confronted by another. Noticing at first your feet, you see that your shoes have been transformed into sandals, you are wearing shorts, a T-shirt with a slogan (Does it say something about the president?), and a black vest with hundreds of buttons with various political messages on them. Peace, dude.

Once again you turn away, hoping now to be done with all of this, only, you find yet another mirror.

You find yourself dressed in torn denim, boots, and a black leather jacket. What is that on your nose? You see it's a silver ring, pierced on the left side. Turning again, you see before an image of yourself, dressed in the strangest attire. Black leather chaps, leather harness with silver studs, and a black leather cap, complete with chain.

Images of what you have witnessed begin to buzz through your mind. You can do nothing but move onward.

At the next mirror, you see the strangest sight yet! You don't even possess the ability to formulate an opinion, for behold! The amalgamation of what has gone before! Black western leather boots, torn fishnet stockings, underneath ripped denim blue jeans, oversized black T-shirt, and an officers' cap. On your right wrist is a band of black leather, and on your right, a diamond bracelet.

You turn to find the last mirror, and as you turn, it begins to glow with a fierce purple light. Within it you see something wondrous! Something that makes you want to sing out

with joy! For within the mirror, you find the image of what you wish you could be. Now think about WHY you wish it to be that way. In doing so you realize the meaning to it all: Were these not images of you all along? Were these not the options you have had since the beginning of time? Are these not the choices that you will have in the future?

Suddenly, the mirror begins to vibrate, then shake violently. The light doesn't seem to be contained by mirror any longer, it spills out into the hallway, dissolving it into nothingness. One by one, the other mirrors fall away, leaving only the void. Then there is silence. The darkness that exists around you is calming, and cooling, and is welcomed by you. You retain the happiness that you felt in the hallway. And then you become aware that you are in a room. You can hear other people in this room as they breathe, almost silently. And you are not alone. Open your eyes.

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http://www.faerywolf.com/myth_asushunamir.htm
38 captures
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About this capture
The Origin of the Queer Ones:
an adaptation by Storm Faerywolf & Claudia Lorie
from the translations of the ancient myth as previously published in
Blossom of Bone by Randy Connor,
Inanna, Queen of Heaven and Earth by Diane Wolkstein and Samuel Kramer,
and The Greatness that was Babylon by H.W.F. Saggs
Commentary by Storm Faerywolf

In many cultures, sexually variant people were known to have possessed certain powers or abilities. Perhaps by the very nature of being "in-between", or "outside" the mainstream gives the Queer person a unique perspective, an advantage in perception that allows for liberation from the usual confines that mainstream society places upon the individual in the name of gender. This encourages the creation of new art, ideas, deepened spiritual awareness, and even healing. We are the "walkers between the worlds" of socially imposed identity and self-created expression, using our perceptual

relationship to provide ourselves with a larger array of choices, and to deepen everyone's understanding of the Universe.

The Queen of Heaven and Earth has been known by many names. The Sumerians knew Her as Inanna; the Babylonians, Ishtar. Countless other cultures have known Her by a million other names. This is the story of Her rescue from the Underworld, the turning of the seasonal wheel, and the creation of a special race of beings: the Queer Ones. By the time it was written down (circa 3000 BCE) it was already ancient.

Ishtar, Queen of Heaven and Earth, without whom the flowers would not grow,
Without whom the ice would never melt, the skies would never brighten,
and the world would forever lay in slumber, awoke in Her fullness to Her beauty.

From the great Above My Lady, Ishtar opened Her ear to the great Below
And the Goddess abandoned Heaven and Earth
To descend into the Underworld
For there lived Her sister Ereshkigal, Queen of the Underworld.
Past the seven gates the Goddess Ishtar would pass, demanding entry,
And at each gate the Goddess was stripped of Her valuables.

And at each gate Ishtar asked, "What is this?"
And my Lady was told: "The ways of the Underworld are perfect. They may not be questioned."
Finally, naked and bowed low Ishtar entered the throne room.
Ereshkigal rose from Her throne and struck Her.
Ishtar was turned to a piece of rotting meat and hung from a hook on the wall.
And Ereshkigal decreed,
"No God, or Goddess, No man or woman may enter the Underworld to rescue Ishtar."

So it was that the Great God Enki was informed
And from His magnificent fingernail, made of light, He fashioned a being, Asushunamir.
Asushunamir a being of light, that was neither male nor female and yet both he and she.
Renewing of light, Asushunamir.
And he sent It to rescue Ishtar.
He and She whose face is brilliant, so beautiful, Asushunamir
Clothed in stars, Asushunamir.

The spell of great Ereshkigal could not possess this luminous being.
Yet She was moved by Asushunamir's beauty, stirred by the creature's voice, by the creature's dance.
Ereshkigal demanded a great feast be held in His-Her honor, the best wine brought to the table.
She dreamed of taking this beautiful being to Her bed, of keeping It with Her in the Land of the Dead

But Asushunamir was careful to pour the wine upon the floor and to eat not food prepared by ghosts.

When Ereshkigal had fallen into drunkenness, the neither-man-nor-woman asked if He-She might taste the Water of Life, which Ereshkigal kept locked in the cellar. Ereshkigal called out to Her servant, "Bring the jug! I shall grant the wish of this fetching creature!" When Ereshkigal fell asleep, Asushunamir made His-Her way to the lampless cell Where Ishtar, held captive, lay.

He-She sprinkled the Goddess with the Water of Life. As the drops fell upon Her, She opened Her eyes. Radiant and flowing with the energy of life, Ishtar quickly made Her way back through the seven gates, ascending to earth and bidding the flowers to grow. Asushunamir was not as fortunate. Ereshkigal awakened as He-She approached the 7th gate and nothing could extinguish Her fires of passion turned to hate.

"The food of the gutter shall be your food!" Great Ereshkigal cried. "The drink of the sewer shall be your drink. In the shadows shall you abide." Having pronounced Her curse upon the creature, She banished Asushunamir.

When Ishtar learned of the terrible curse placed upon the luminous being, She wept and spoke softly so that no one might hear, "The power of Ereshkigal is great. No one dares defy Her. But just as winter was softened and turned towards spring, I may so soften the curse upon you. For many ages you will suffer. Those who are like you, queer ones, lovers of men, kin to my sacred women, shall be as strangers in their homes. Their families will keep them as secrets in the shadows and will leave them nothing. The drunken shall smite their faces, and the mighty shall imprison them.

"But if you will remember Me, how you were born from the light of the stars to save Me from death and rid the earth of winter, I shall harbor you and your kind. You shall be My special children, and I shall make you my priests. I shall grant you the gift of prophecy, the wisdom of the earth and moon. You shall banish illness from My children, as you have stolen Me from Ereshkigal and the Land of No Return.

"And when you adorn yourselves in My robes I shall dance in your feet and sing in your throats, and no one shall be able to resist your enchantments.

"When the earthen jug is brought forth from the 7 gates you shall be freed from the spell of Ereshkigal. Once more you shall be called Asushunamir. Being clothed in light. Your kind shall be called Those Whose Faces Are Brilliant. Those Who Have Come to

Renew the Light, the blessed ones of Ishtar."

It is interesting to note that the very power of Asushunamir lies in His-Her Queerness, that wonderful ambiguity that allows us to live not only as men or as women, but more fully as humans, and by extension, as spiritual beings. He-She exists in the crack between the established order of things, and is therefore not subject to its laws or limitations. In this myth it is also important to note that by rescuing Ishtar from the Underworld, thus restoring springtime to the earth, He-She is effectively embodying the powers of fecundity, that which makes things fertile, a role that gays and lesbians have long been denied because of our lack of procreative sexual expression.

In one sense, the lesson of Asushunamir is one of choices. He-She is given the choice to claim His-Her power and eventually even to break the curse of Ereshkigal if only He-She were to remember the goddess Ishtar, and more importantly, His-Her origin from the light of the stars. While we do not have a choice in who we are or where we come from, we can choose to live the truth that is inside us, even if that means being cursed by the dark ignorance of a repressive society. But even in the midst of that curse a blessing is possible, if only we choose to take it: to use our pain and our sensitivity, our tears and our laughter, to propel us forward to embody the beauty of our true selves and to express it outward so that others may benefit from our example. Being true to our own nature is the most powerful religious, magickal and political act possible. May we always have the courage to do so.

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http://www.faerywolf.com/myth_ganymede.htm

38 captures
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About this capture
A Ganymede Tale

Atop the great Mt. Olympus,
blessed kingdom of the Gods,
the great God Zeus stirred and was moved to gaze down upon the earth.
There he saw a wondrous sight, the youth Ganymede stretching to greet the day.
The morning sun reflected upon his shining body,
his naked flesh a beacon of light,
and Zeus was aroused, transfixed by the beauty of this boy.
"O to taste the lips of such a beauty", great Zeus decreed, "He will be my own."

Great Zeus transformed Himself into the likeness of an eagle
and abandoned His magnificent home on the mountain
to find the one that moved Him, this youth with unspeakable beauty.

"The Ascension of Ganymede" (detail) ©2005 Storm Faerywolf. Click [HERE](#) to view full image.

When Zeus found the boy He surprised him, and Ganymede, startled, flew back in terror.

But Zeus soothed him, saying "Fear not, for I am King of all the Gods, and I am moved by your beauty."

Ganymede knew then not to be afraid and he was comforted by the touch of Zeus, of flesh against flesh.

"If you will come with me," the Great Lord began, "I will set you on high. You shall be the chalice and I the sword. You will bear the Sacred Cup to all the Gods, and will be forever at My side. I will make you immortal that your youth and beauty will never fade, and we shall be together for always."

Moved by the words and touch of the Great Lord, Ganymede spoke: "Great Lord of all the Gods and men, my heart is filled with love and I am yours. To you I surrender my body. To you I surrender my heart. To you I surrender my essence. I can do nothing else but to accept my wondrous fate and flee this earth with you who shines so brightly in my heart."

And Zeus was moved by the words of love, spoken by the innocent and carried him aloft into the morning skies towards the great Mt. Olympus.

"Forever you shall be known as my special one", Zeus declared. "And forever shall you be kept in comfort and pleasures, matched in strength only by my power, and your beauty."

And so it was that Ganymede became the Cup Bearer to the Gods, and the lover of Zeus.

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47 captures
6 Mar 2001 - 25 Oct 2013
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14
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About this capture
Narcissus

From the east in springtime walking,
toward the brook with shade of tree,
Narcissus sits while calmly looking,
into the waters bubbling free.

Down below this place of motion,
into the darkened place of rest,
exists the secrets of all loving,
Narcissus moves to see them best.

A deeper gaze into the waters,
reveals longing in the heart,
a love surpassing all known beauty,
Narcissus pierced by Cupid's dart.

An overflowing heart with love,
that spills into a crystal stream,
reflects upon the moving waters,
and calls for union in the deep.

"Narcissus" ©2003 Storm Faerywolf

Closer to the mirrored waters,
Narcissus leans to catch a glimpse,
of the one who beckons softly,
from underneath with parted lips.

Moving forward for the kiss,
Narcissus takes his final breath,
and dives into the icy waters,
to meet with secrets beyond death.

Delving into dreams below,
discovery of what was torn apart,
of self and knowing, self and love,
and union now with this, his heart.

Don't weep for him, our passing hero,
true his time on earth did pass,
but through his heart made whole he conquered,
reborn into the Shining Lands.

8/24/00

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29 captures
2 Mar 2001 - 25 Jan 2021
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About this capture
Invocation of the Queer Ones

From the Lavender Lands, and the space in between,
From the cracks in the world, in the order of things,
We summon the Queer Ones, the fount of our love,
To rise from below and descend from above,

To bridge now the gap that exists in our hearts,
To heal the pain that has torn us apart.
Bring us your laughter and lend us your song.
Join in the struggle endured for so long,
That we now might taste of the water of life,
And be free from the curse that has caused us such strife.
Let us remember our power and place
Of our home from the stars, in the sweet ones embrace,
To reclaim now the ancient blessing once given,
from the Goddess of Earth, the Goddess of Heaven:
For ours is the wisdom of moon and of earth,
We stand at the gate between death and of birth.
As the fathers of beauty, as the mothers of souls,
we are healers of spirit, and we walk between worlds.

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33 captures
19 Feb 2002 - 31 May 2023
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About this capture
The Holy Cock
6/14/00

Scarlet scepter,
shaft of life,
rising and falling, this pillar of flesh,
arousal of passion,
the flame of desire,
bear witness to the triumph of pleasure.
This hunger,
fed only by you,
leads us as seekers to your religion,

and we worship with bended knee,
with parted lips,
our mouths agape with wild tongue,
to receive the baptismal.
Nectar rains from the God above,
we struggle to taste its heavy scent,
rain down and renew our spirits.
Our skin anointed with the holy balm,
who's dark fragrance enraptures.
No perfume compares to your intoxication.
Our mouths the cup that overflows,
your love onto the earth.
There is such beauty,
in the seed that is spilled in the name of lust.
Through this we are all made God.
Through this our bodies are made Holy.

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38 captures
27 Oct 2001 - 29 Apr 2012
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About this capture
The Queer Triangle
by Storm Faerywolf

Symbols have a special role in the building of any community. Having the power to unify ideas and concepts, symbols can serve as focal points of collective attention and energy, allowing for directed action. Communicating their messages in a deeper way than mere words, symbols have the power to reach inside our psyches causing real change, and making lasting impressions. Once a symbol holds meaning for us personally we can begin to identify with it, and by extension with others who feel the

same. It is under these banners that kinships are formed; that families are made and celebrated, that our dead are mourned and remembered. Community being woven, strand, by strand, life by life. Sometimes these symbols are those that the community creates for itself. Sometimes they are thrust upon us.

In the late 1930's the Pink Triangle was used by Hitler's regime (as part of their system for the classification of criminals) to identify a homosexual male. Females who were "unusable" by the regime (such as lesbians, prostitutes, and others who exhibited anti-social behavior) were given the Black Triangle. Used as a means to isolate and oppress, the triangle loomed dark over the heads of untold thousands of gay men and women, as they made their way to concentration camps for imprisonment, abuse, and even execution.

Resurrected in the 1980's by ACT-UP (and inverted to represent fighting back) the Pink Triangle has since become a symbol of our individual pride for gay men, as well as lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered persons. As well as being a reminder of what we've been through, it is also a promise to never again go silently. Some lesbian and feminist groups have similarly adopted the use of the Black Triangle to represent their unique voices in the cause. From all walks of life, under this banner, united.

Once symbols have a history, they begin to take on power. Once symbols have power they can begin to communicate to us directly.

What follows is a conceptual model inspired, in part, by my work in the Feri tradition (See The Iron Pentacle) as well as my own trance experiences while meditating on the triangle.

The three points of the triangle represent forces that are in constant relationship with each other in a state of dynamic balance. When meditating on the individual concepts of the points, our psychic attention is drawn towards their essence. Through controlled breathing and attention we can enter into trance in which we can communicate with otherwise hidden aspects of ourselves, as well as with outside forces, all through the realm of the symbolic.

Remembrance forms the first basis for our foundation. We must allow ourselves to learn from the past, both by recognizing past mistakes, and by drawing strength from our collective achievements. Our collective memory is the thread that binds us together. Our common history is what makes us brothers and sisters. When we remember, we rebuild.

Pride forms the second "half" of our foundation. Once we have remembered our origins, and claimed them, we can allow ourselves to shine brightly; to allow our true selves to shine through. When in balance, Pride is never comparative, or condescending. Pride is the singular shining of the Now that burns from our hearts in fiery passion and love of